SMALL SPACES, BIG MOMENTS:

UNDERSTANDING THE SPATIALIZED LIVED EXPERIENCES OF

YOUTH AND ADULTS IN RESTRICTED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

by

Katherine Scott Newhouse

Dissertation Committee:

Professor Srikala Naraian, Sponsor
Professor Lalitha Vasudevan

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ABSTRACT

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The current way of "doing" inclusive education in many US public schools includes re-imagining the spaces where a young person is receiving their educational services. Still, many schools and programs are set up to provide specialized educational services in a specific place. Most often, this place is outside of the general education classroom and deemed to have rehabilitative properties. Therefore, research that draws on the lived experiences of people in restricted educational programs is needed to understand more clearly how policies of inclusion and exclusion are not only enacted, but lived by the people inhabiting those spaces. By designing a qualitative study that is an ethnographic narrative inquiry, this project describes restricted educational programs from the perspectives of the people who occupy them. This study draws on the words and experiences of participants within restricted educational programs to explore what a concerted focus on the spatial dimension illuminates about these spaces and youth

learning. Taking an iterative approach this study used ethnographic methods such as, participant observation and open-ended and semi-structured interviewing to inquire alongside educators who work with young people with disabilities and young people who are court involved in restrictive educational programs.

The methodological choice to collect data at two separate restricted educational programs, one in-school and one after school was intentional to investigate the nature of the label “restrictive” and its spatial properties. The research demonstrates that spaces are dynamic and fluid but often limited by the socio-spatial location such as, during or after school. Often it is the adults within each respective space who engage in practices of teaching and learning which either limit youth or provide youth with more expansive curricular possibilities. More consistently youth engage in practices, which add to the dynamic nature of how spaces are socially produced. From this an understanding of the project of inclusive education emerges which demands concerted attention be paid to the spatial dimension of inquiry, one that requires educators, more broadly, to participate in reflexive practices related to understanding their own socio-spatial position along with the socio-spatial position of the youth with whom they are constructing spaces.

DEDICATION

For *Julius*, who left too soon,

and *Herman* who recently arrived.

[One] who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. . . .Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this, the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong what is against it…I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions…I would write on the lintels of the doorpost, *Whim*. I hope it is somewhat better than whim at last, but we cannot spend the day in explanation.

- Emerson, *Self Reliance,* 1841

I can't be a singular expression of myself, there's too many parts, too many spaces, too many manifestations, too many lines, too many curves, too many troubles, too many journeys, too many mountains, too many rivers, so many…

- Solange Knowles*, "Can I hold the mic,"* 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My name is placed on this document as the author, but I did very little of this work on my own. We all say that (people writing acknowledgements for large projects) but we say that because it is true!

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Finally, I am thankful to Dr. Quinn for her role as fourth reader of this project and I look forward to the insightful conversations that I hope develop as she engages with this work.

I also owe thanks to many professors and faculty at Teachers College. There are a few who helped with early versions or iterations of this project. Thank you to: Dr. David Hansen, Dr.

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With love and solidarity,

KSN

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PREFACE

Completing this document amidst a global pandemic, I was inevitably altered by recent events in the Unites States, and more specifically New York City, in regards to the COVID-19 outbreak.

In recent weeks, my thoughts returned again-and-again to one of the youth research participants from the Saturn School, Brian, who relied on the continuous use of a ventilator to live his life. He was one of my most upbeat participants, a drummer in a band with a well-known Jewish musician who also loved NY sports. Brian regaled me with tales of playing on the Carnegie Hall stage and Radio City Music hall. He lamented the inaccessibility of most performance spaces and happily showed me how the Saturn School had a fully accessible stage with a ramp. Living through the coronavirus outbreak and now pandemic, I think about Brian and all the youth at Saturn School and the Voices program, which is the after school program where I collected data for this project.

I think of Brian, and his full life, which he lived because of the supports provided by his community. I am deeply unsettled by the rhetoric that some in our US society still argue for: the sacrifice of the vulnerable towards a greater economic good. I start this project by expressing gratitude to this dissertation, the research study itself. Conducting this research allowed me to share spaces with people who continually disrupted my thinking about what it means to be vulnerable, what it means to provide care and offer support. It helped me articulate how I might (with many others) continue to shift societal understandings towards mutual aid and authentic community collaboration. With that being said, I humbly offer this dissertation research study.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Prologue

A vignette: *It's a Wednesday afternoon in early March and the long cold winter lingers. The heat is pumping into the small classroom at the front of the community center in East Harlem. I sit with six participants, five young men and one young woman, all between the ages of 11-15 around a foldout banquet table. This is the setting of the Creative writing and Storytelling workshops I facilitate twice a week at Voices, an Alternative to the Detention after-school program. As a beginning activity for a larger play-writing project, this afternoon, I have pre-written scenarios that I plan to read to participants in order to begin character development. I begin with a scenario about one character coming home to find another character changing a baby's diaper. This is not expected by character One. Where did the baby come from? I ask. Who is the first character? Who finds him/her with the baby?*

Working through this scene together with the group, Jason, one participant, becomes increasingly engaged and animated. First, he describes the scene he is creating in his head. He asks his fellow participant for feedback: "Would she do that?" he asks aloud, "What about this?" drawing other members of the workshop into the scene he is creating. He leaps out of his seat—standing in order to go through the motions of the scene. He uses his hands, arms and body to show us where different set pieces would go. I can tell his mind is moving quickly, the smile on his face communicating his excitement about the scene he is intently developing. He pauses, looks at me, then turns to the group and says, "I think this is what I'm meant to do. This should be my life". Several participants laugh. A few respond, "You really like this huh"? and "You're acting out the whole thing man" and "I can tell you don't do this at school". Jason replies, "Well, I'm not in school right now and I already have an idea for my first movie. Let me describe the first scene" He steps back, with the attention of the whole workshop, and begins to describe a long pier, deserted in the evening, where two men are meeting…

Close your eyes, what image of Jason emerges for you?

Jason is a fifteen-year-old male who is classified as emotionally disturbed. Recent psychological and educational testing places him far below average in reading fluency, reading comprehension and oral language expression. He

tested below average in math fluency and conceptual math understanding. Jason continues to score in the far below grade level range on his state testing. Though Jason's educational testing scores are consistently far below average, he does perform adequately on in-class tests and quizzes. Therefore, the IEP team determined his disability is not cognitive in nature but instead a result of his behavior. He has a long educational history of disruptive behavior towards other students. He was recently suspended from school for the second time and has been attending a mandated suspension site until about a month ago when he was placed on home instruction. Jason was placed on home instruction because of an altercation at his suspension site that also led to his arrest. While his court case is being adjudicated he is mandated to attend the Voices after school program, an alternative to detention located in his community. The court-mandated four hours that he spends at Voices for three days a week (a total of 12 hours) constitutes the only time he spends with his same age peers in an educational setting.

Close your eyes, what image of Jason do you construct now?

Another vignette: *It's 7:45am on a typical April school day when the classroom door bursts wide open. Bryan, an 8th grade student is standing resolutely in the doorframe. It's part of Bryan's morning routine to visit his homeroom classroom before schools starts each morning. A few months earlier his father made the choice to drop Bryan off at school. He did this to avert the agitated hour-long bus ride that caused problems for Bryan when he was enrolled at Lincoln Grove in early January. Most mornings Bryan feeds the class turtle Squishy and waits for his teacher to walk over to his pre-algebra class together.*

But today, as Bryan moves from the doorway he careens into the room and slams his body down in the desk chair adjacent to the back of the room. Bryan sits with his head in his hands, slumped forward, his backpack still on, grumbling under his breath.

"I am never speaking to my Dad again!" Bryan says loudly. He buries his face in his hands and moans. The emotional range he typically expresses shifts from being frustrated (he has a strong stubborn streak) to being affable (his classmates often engage Bryan in making jokes). This moment is quite different. "I HATE HIM!" Bryan says loudly. A fat teardrop, with animated-like precision, runs down Bryan's cheek and plops to the ground. The educators in the classroom sit patiently alongside Bryan, letting his face become wet with tears. One of the teachers quietly reaches out and places her hand gently on his shoulder. In a brief moment, a tableau of human connection is created. Bryan takes a tissue and wipes his eyes. His breath is more even, his calm, resolute

manner restored. "Ok, let's walk over to math" he sighs as he collects himself to leave the room.

Close your eyes, what image of Bryan emerges for you?

Brian is a thirteen-year-old male who received a diagnosis of autism when he was three years old. He is a new student to the school and arrived with IEP documentation and a detailed behavior plan. Bryan often exhibits persistive behaviors and easily becomes fixated on a task that he must complete before moving onto another task. Recent psychological educational testing demonstrates that Bryan scores in the average to above average range in the areas of math fluency and math conceptual understanding. The same testing showed that Bryan is far below average in reading comprehension and below average in reading fluency. Bryan's speech and language therapist reports that Bryan benefits from structured social situations. Speech and language testing demonstrates that expressive language is a deficit for Bryan. State testing demonstrates that Bryan is in the average range in the area of math comprehension but he continues to test far below grade level in the area of reading comprehension. Due to this he receives English academic education in a separate class with an emphasis on skill building and remediation. He is currently enrolled in an integrated co-taught Math class. Bryan is well liked by his peers but since he benefits from support using oral communication he is still working to develop his social/emotional skill-set. He attends a speech and language social communication group once a week during his lunch period.

Close your eyes, what image of Bryan do you construct now?

Introduction

In the proceeding vignettes I offer two versions, two ways of knowing Jason and Bryan because at the outset of this project, I want to acknowledge the openness of interpretation and multiple ways of knowing a lived experience. The unfinished quality of a story, coupled with the fact that we live our lives narratively (Bruner, 2004; Frank

2010), lends a beautiful and terrifying quality to human life. Humans are made up of the layers of thoughts and ideas that precede us, and remain long after us. Following Frank (2010) this work aims to let stories speak for themselves. Frank states, "People grow up being cast into stories as actors are cast into their parts in a play—but that is too deterministic a metaphor. People are like actors cast in multiple scripts that are all unfinished" (p. 7). When we begin to consider the multiple perspectives stories ask us to take up, a richer and fuller description of the people caught within them begins to take shape. The unfinished quality of stories can be unsettling as people live out their own stories. Frank points out that some stories are made for us to grow on (p. 7); they cause us to act out a specific role, because of how others' telling of the story has constructed us.

In an attempt to let stories breathe (Frank, 2010) I intentionally begin this document by letting stories have the first word, because I acknowledge how much I speak, write and think alongside the stories throughout this project. Acknowledging the stories we act on and which act on us, I draw from Frank (2010) when he states, "stories and material objects work together, each informing the other" (p. 7). In this dissertation I extend this argument to think about the physical spaces in which stories are lived, told, storied, and re-storied (Clandinin, 2013). Stories work on spaces in a similar way to how they work on people. In fact, spaces are stories. How people think about, represent, and build spaces is part of how humans come to understand a given context, in terms of, what it is, what goes on there and most importantly for this project, *who* belongs there.

In the proceeding stories, Jason is a young man who is court-involved. He participated in a legal infraction and is currently not attending school while waiting for his case to be adjudicated. He is mandated to attend an Alternative To Detention program

(ATDP) after school five days a week, in lieu of being sent to a detention facility. The ATDP is defined as a community-based after school program that a young person is mandated to attend until their court case is dismissed or brought to trial (Aledort, 2009). The two different textual descriptions of Jason shared above conjure different images, and perhaps different spaces within which the reader imagines him located. Bryan is a young man who receives special education services and is enrolled in a self-contained classroom for forty percent of his school day. His individualized education program (IEP) mandates he receive English Language Arts and Social Studies academic instruction in a self-contained classroom. A self-contained classroom is defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) as a classroom with a smaller student-teacher ratio that also provides additional support for students with labeled disabilities. Again, the two different textual representations of Bryan, shared above, potentially result in the imagining of different spaces, which he may occupy.

Both young men spend a significant portion of their school day segregated from their same age peers. On paper, this may seem like a small detail but as I show through this research, the action of assigning a young person to spend time segregated in a specific space has large implications for how they understand themselves, and how others understand them, across their educational career and lifetime. I use stories in this project to show a complicated system at work. Inevitably, I grew with the stories I collected for this project as I came to understand the lived experiences of young people and adults in restricted educational programs.

Guided by special education and juvenile justice legislation (Family Court Act FCT § 720, n.d.; IDEA, 2004), I define a restricted educational program as: a space either in

a school or outside of school where a young person is mandated to attend and remain enrolled for a period of time (6o days to the entire school year). This mandate may come from the service program described on the young person's individualized educational plan (IEP) or through placement connected to court involvement. Another important feature of restricted educational programs is the lower ratio of young people to adults in a given space (e.g., a restricted educational program may have twelve students, with one teacher and one paraprofessional whereas a general education classroom, considered less restrictive typically has 25-35 students with one teacher).

Too often, we take for granted the social processes (of which stories are a large part) that create dynamic spaces (Lefebvre, 1991). By deeply engaging with the stories emerging from restricted educational programs, my goal is "to try and make sense of what is going on now" (Potts, 1998, p. 16) from within these spaces. This is arguably complicated by the wealth of research (Algozzine, Morsink & Algozzine, 1988; Causton-Theoharis, Theoharis, Orsati, & Cosier, 2011; Dunn, 1968) that illustrates the impoverished experience of teaching and learning in restricted educational programs and highlights the negative outcomes for young people who receive their education in exclusionary spaces (Allan, 2004; Bogdan & Kugelmass, 1984; Connor, 2009; Williams & Downing, 1998).

Research demonstrates that young people mandated to attend restrictive educational programs are often the most vulnerable (cf. Annamma, 2018; Erevelles, 2014) as well as most often pushed to the margins (Rose, Meyers & Hitchock, 2006). Yet, restricted educational programs continue to exist. Though the population of court involved youth and youth receiving special education services sometimes overlap

(Annamma, 2018). It is an attention to the similar spatial trajectories for both populations of young people that requires more "care-full" inquiry (Vasudevan & DeJaynes, 2013) as to why these programs continue to exist and what is happening within them. Furthermore, in taking up an ethnographic, narrative and spatial methods I attended to what stories people tell *about* what happens in restricted educational programs and how this forces educational researchers to reconsider the spatial dimension of the term "restrictive" as a starting point for further inquiry. Before going any further I state my position in regards to how I consider and conceptualized this dissertation study.

Positionality

My social and political location is always important and something I reflected on, bumped up against and wrestled with throughout this entire dissertation. I began the document by sharing different perspectives of two stories about two young men from my previous lived experiences. This is my attempt to show the deep tension, which began for myself as a white nondisabled woman teaching in a special education high school that was predominantly comprised of Black students. My entry point into the public teaching profession was about race and socio-economic status even when it was not explicitly named as such. The stories I began this document with were moments in my own teaching experience (as a classroom special education teacher and afterschool workshop facilitator), which caused me to pause and fundamentally question my role and position as an educator within systems (such as the education and juvenile justice system) that consistently put privilege in my favor.

My methodological choice to return to restricted educational programs, which are similar to those I occupied as a teacher and workshop facilitator, was intentional. My choice to read varied authors and source widely through out this dissertation was also intentional and connected to my explicit use of feminist citation practices which provides me opportunities to cite colleagues with whom I work in community and solidarity. I believe there are viewpoints, ideas, and ways of knowing and being, that are missing from the large body of educational research (Patel, 2005). I use my position with intention in support of collecting and analyzing data to make a strong argument for the necessity of qualitative ethnographic narrative inquiry, which engages with youth and adults in restricted educational programs. I engaged in reflexive practices (such as memo-ing, collaging and member checks) across this project to maintain a critical awareness towards my own position while conducting the research for this dissertation project.

Background of the Problem

In 1975, Federal Public Law No. 94-142 was passed by both houses of the legislature and became a law. More commonly known as, the Education for all Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142), this legislation mandated free appropriate public education (FAPE) for children with disabilities, stating that all children with disabilities should be provided federally funded equal access to education (Yell, 2010) in the least restrictive educational environment. Prior to 1975 when a family brought their child with a disability label to school and attempted to enroll them, the family was often denied access to enrollment because the school claimed it did not have resources to support

students with disabilities (Sonneborn, 2012). The passing of PL 94-142 made it illegal for schools to refuse enrollment of a young person based on their disability label. In 1990, bolstered by the growth of the Disability rights movement (Davis, 2016) the legislation was amended and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).[1] Since 1990, IDEA legislation has been revised and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), yet the founding tenets about access and least restrictive environment remain central to the legislation (Yell, 2010).

The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is a principle from special education law and policy. The LRE is defined by the democratic concepts of due process and equality, (Taylor, 1988, p. 219) it emphasizes that all people participating in education should do so in a manner free from restraint. Though this is taken up in various ways, in practice the LRE most often refers to the general education classroom, which is currently viewed as the most "normal" setting for receiving education within the North American public school system (Taylor, 1988).

[1] Though IDEA was revised in 2004 and renamed IDEIA, much of the current data about special education programs and services is listed under the site: idea.ed.gov. Therefore, I refer to the legislation as IDEA in this chapter.

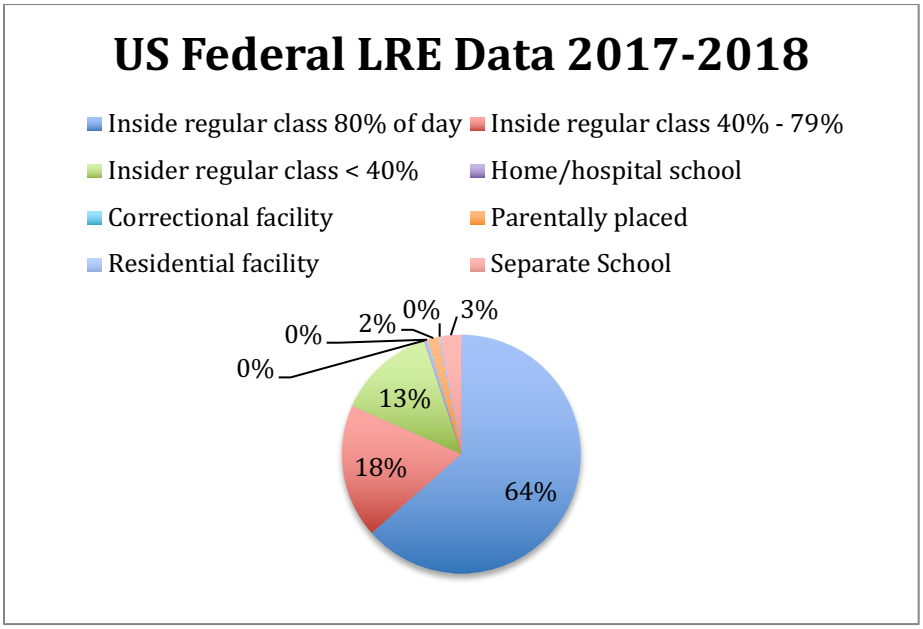

Figure 1: US Federal LRE Data from 2017-2018

Federal LRE data from IDEA reporting in 2017-2018 (Table 1) shows the national breakdown of where young people receive special education programs and services, as well as, services related to juvenile justice. While it is heartening to see 64% of young people across the United States are enrolled in regular classrooms (considered the least restrictive environment) for up to 80% of their school day. This means that a 36% of the young people aged 6-21 with labeled disabilities and our court involvement are receiving special education services with limited access to the general education environment (listed in table as "inside regular classroom"), per their individualized education program. The point being that for a significant percentage of young people aged 6-21 large portions of their school day include instruction that requires their segregation from same age peers.

More important still, is the collective 5% of youth (aged 6-21) nationwide who spend some part of their educational careers in correctional facilities, separate schools, parentally placed and home/hospital school that are the population of interest for this research project. Federal data about court-involved youth who are not receiving special education programs and services demonstrates similar trends in terms of segregating young people, who have been arrested, for a portion of their school day (if the young person is currently enrolled in school) (Roy-Stevens, 2004). This is a slightly different picture from the IDEA LRE reporting data for Center City public school district, which encompasses the two sites for this dissertation research project.

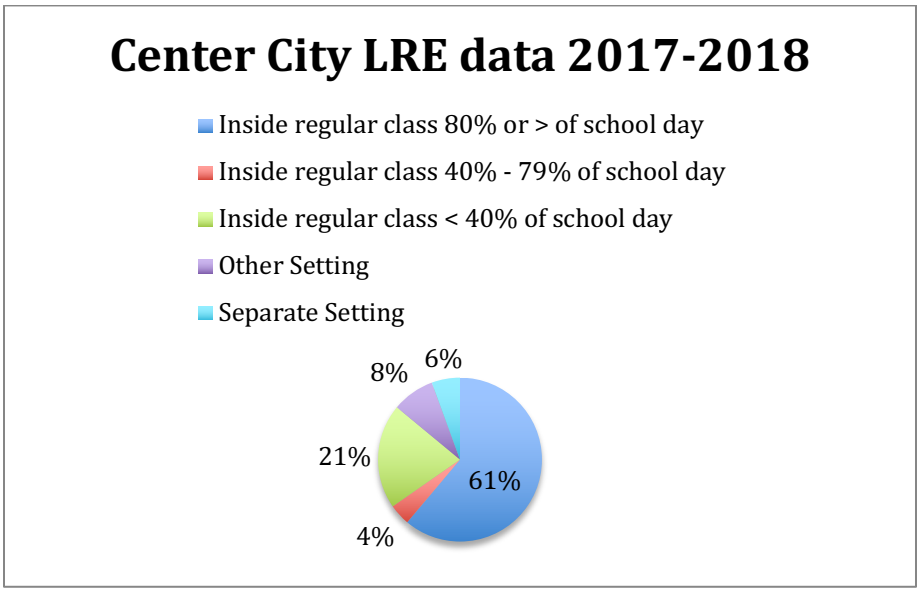

Figure 2: Center City LRE reporting data from 2017-2018

Center City IDEA LRE reporting data from 2017-2018 shows that 61% of students with disabilities spend 80 percent of their school day in a general education classroom. This statistic aligns with the nationwide average of LRE reporting data. It is the statistics from more restrictive settings that are more worrying in Center City. Though

Center City provides slightly different labels, LRE data shows that 8% of young people are enrolled in “other” setting while 6% are enrolled in a “separate” setting classroom placement. This means 14% of youth receiving special education programs and services from the Center City public school district are not currently accessing general education classrooms with their same age peers (https://data.nysed.gov/specialed/?year=2018& instid=7889678368 - Indicator5). This is nine percentage points higher than the National average. This means that in Center City (and the surrounding area served by its school district) there is a significant statistical uptick in the number of young people who spend a majority of their educational career outside of the general education classroom environment.

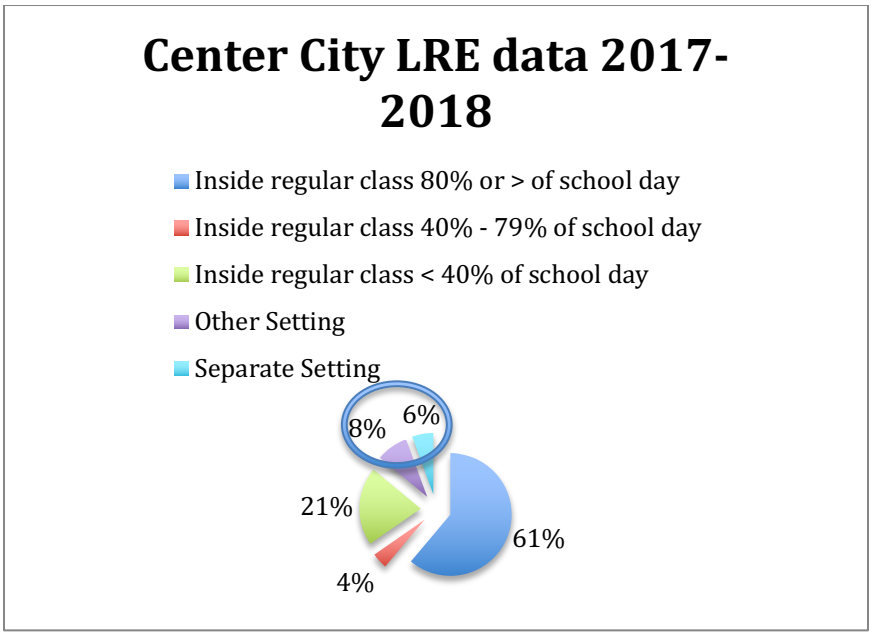

Figure 3: Highlighting Center City LRE data for settings labeled “separate” and “other”

The Center City LRE reporting data uses the term "separate" setting to refer to a separate school and/or home instruction—"placed on by the CSE[2]" or hospital in-patient (being educated in a hospital). The "other" setting refers to youth educated in detention settings (incarceration), "parentally placed in a nonpublic school receiving publicly funded special education services", "parentally placed in non public school NOT receiving publicly funded special education services, or home schooled at parent's choice (www.data.nysed.gov). Federal and state LRE data poses another problem in that it does not account for physical building space, but instead looks at how many school hours are spent in a given environment (http://data.nysed.gov). Put another way, this data may or may not accurately reflect the *types* of spaces where a young person is receiving their education.

This 8% results in young people receiving their education in a restricted educational program. I use the term "restricted educational program" on purpose to highlight that for young people with labeled disabilities, or those who are court involved, placement in the "other" setting(s) result in a segregation from same-age peers. Even with legislation such as the IDEIA (2004), debates about placement and services for many young people with labeled disabilities continue to lead to exclusionary outcomes, such as placement in a restricted educational program. One reason is that often, the spaces themselves are positioned as having rehabilitative properties. Slee (2011) refers to this practice of placing a young person in a restricted educational setting in order to "fix" a perceived lack of academic development (or, where court involved youth are concerned, a moral deficit), as a foundational tenet of special education. In other words, special

[2] Committees on Special Education

education programs and services are based on the perceived need for individualized instruction for remediating students with labeled disabilities (Valle & Connor, 2010). A restricted educational program is often described as a static place, where a young person is sent which is geared towards "fixing" youth.

While recent research related to inclusive education shows the process of assigning a young person placement in a specific space in order to access to specialized support (often referred to as special education) may be a fallacy (cf. Allan, 1999; Slee, 2011). The field of traditional special education continues to conduct research on programs and services that documents their presumed effectiveness in "fixing" the academic and social/emotional "needs" of young people (Fuchs, Fuchs & Stecker, 2010; Hehir, 2005; Kaufman, 1975). A critical spatial lens permits questioning of the fixed nature of place/space and how a concept, such as the LRE, is bound to the subjectivities of the various stakeholders in how determinations about placement are made. These various stakeholders include: individualized education program (IEP) team members for young people with labeled disabilities, and court officials, lawyers and judges, for court involved youth). If an underlying assumption of the LRE principle maintains that some spaces are "more" rehabilitative than others, spatial theory helps us to understand how the social processes which uphold how a concept, such as the LRE is understood and taken up through an analysis of restricted educational programs.

This continued exclusion has important outcomes for young people educated in restricted educational programs. Furthermore, building on the work of critical feminists, geographers and spatial theorists, (Anzaldua, 1999; Harvey, 2012; Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 2005; Soja, 1996), I argue that it is the spaces themselves that are worthy of

continued research and care-full attention. By conducting research with educators and young people who occupy restricted educational programs and learning about their experiences from within these spaces, educational researchers may better understand the impact of policy mechanisms that sort students and aid in the continued creation of these programs. This allows for more research, which addresses how large policies that construct and sustain restricted educational programs are experienced and described by the people in those spaces (Craig, 2003). Thereby prompting the question: what does it mean for a young person to spend part of their PreK-12 educational career in an "other" setting?

The "other" category is broad but there are overlaps in the ways that the connections between spaces and lives were conceptualized for each group (e.g., disabled youth and court involved youth). Adopting spatial theorizing is one way to understand how restricted educational programs are constructed. Reviewing the history of institutions and the de-institutionalization movement during the second half of the twentieth century, the emphasis on "other" spaces seems to be a vestige of the period before the passing of Federal Public Law No. 94-142 which mandated young people with labeled disabilities receive their schooling from their local school (Ben-Moshe, Carey & Chapman, 2014; Trent, 1994). There is a similar historical trajectory related to juvenile justice. For instance, in the second half of the twentieth century advocates of juvenile justice placed an emphasis on alternative sentencing, which included serving a mandated sentence in the home community as opposed to being sent to a juvenile detention facility away from the community (Aledort, 2009). More recently initiatives such as "close to home" (Ananthakrishnan, Schiraldi & Weissman, 2019) led to a significant reduction in

how many youth from Center City are remanded to "state-operated youth prisons" (p. 1), opting instead for community based alternative placements for court involved youth.

This project does not aim to make a comparison between the lived experiences of court involved youth, and young people with disability labels. Even as it builds on research, which demonstrates that young people with disability labels are more likely to also have the label of court involvement (Adams and Erevelles, 2016; Annamma, 2018; Mahon-Reynolds & Parker, 2016; Watts & Erevelles, 2004). More significantly, it highlights what is missing from both bodies of work: an explicit focus on the spatial dimensions of the lived experiences of young people who are court involved and young people with labeled disabilities. Both groups of youth who are often "sent" or "mandated to attend" a specific restricted educational program as a result of their being labeled with a disability or court involvement. Adding the spatial dimension to this work allows for an attention to the social processes, which produce a space, such as a restricted educational program, and to come to understand from the lived experiences of the people who occupy the spaces, the possibilities of disability as social-spatial phenomena, which may not have been adequately considered.

In recent years, a conceptualization of special education as a "service and not a place" was put forth by Dorothy Kerzner Lipsky and Alan Gartner (1997) and has gained traction in the traditional special education research base as well amongst inclusive education scholars. This has challenged educators and researchers to expand their understanding of how and *where* special education services are delivered. Still, in a school district such as Center City, only 4% of youth spend 40%-79% in the general education classroom setting and 21% spend less than 40% of their school day in the

general education setting with same age peers. This demonstrates that while a substantial percentage of young people are included in the general education classroom, this only occurs for a part of their school day. It appears, at least in Center City, that special education remains viewed as an activity, which occurs in fixed places where specific services are provided that are geared towards remediation and rehabilitation.

This fact becomes even more apparent when we consider *which* young people with disability labels are being included in a general education environment for up to 60% of the day and *which* young people with labeled disabilities make up the students who are only being included for 20% of their school day. Often students who are labeled as "severely" disabled, students with intellectual disabilities and students with multiple disabilities, are systematically excluded from opportunities to access the general education curriculum for more than 50% of their school day (Bone, 2017). Traditional special educational research (Leinhardt & Pallay, 1982), disability studies in education research (Reynolds, 1989) and newspaper articles (Rosenbloom, 2010), when discussing the inclusion of students with disability labels, make the note that this (inclusion) applies to all but "severely and profoundly mentally or physically handicapped" (Leinhardt & Pallay, 1982). Carlson (2009) provides some analysis when she states,

> The institutions for the ''feebleminded'' in many ways contributed to the marginalization of persons with intellectual disabilities, insofar as they removed them from communities and placed them at their margins. And one could say that within philosophy, too, the ''intellectually disabled'' have occupied a marginal place, both insofar as there is relatively little said about them and insofar as what is said often places them at the far edges of our moral boundaries. (p. 554)

Taking up a lens of critical spatial theory alongside a Disability studies in education framework allows researchers to "see" more starkly these institutional practices, which promote inclusion but remain rooted in exclusionary practices (Armstrong, 2003).

Due to their perceived "fixed" boundaries, restricted educational programs allow a researcher using critical spatial theory to attempt to understand the complexity within the lived experiences of people occupying these spaces. Massey (2005) writes, "In so much philosophy it is time which has been a source of excitement (in its life) or terror (in its passing). I want to argue that space is equally exhilarating and threatening" (p. 59). Using a critical spatial lens alongside a Disability studies in education framework allows for closer attention to the spaces themselves and their inhabitants; closer attention to what happens within restricted educational programs and how the social interactions within these programs help to constitute and reconstitute the meaning of the spaces themselves.

Who are the 8% of young people in Center City who are enrolled in "other" settings? What are their stories? The large data movement (Taubman, 2009) eschews the individual story of a young person receiving special education services, or a young person who has been arrested. By attending to the spatial dimension there is the possibility to gain a clearer understanding of how individuals are experiencing and enacting large data trends and what this means for how spaces are constructed in schools. Taking up the lens of spatiality provided another way for understanding the trends of how certain classrooms are represented, built and lived.

Statement of the Problem

IDEA legislation side steps the issue of defining the LRE and instead provides two guiding principles of how this concept should be employed by members of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. First, IDEA states that children with disabilities must receive their education in the general education classroom to the "maximum extent that is appropriate" (IDEA, 2004). Second, IDEA states that removal from the general education environment into special classes or separate schools should only occur if the child's disability requires a specific program or service that cannot be provided in the general education environment. This description of LRE from IDEA leaves to the members of the IEP team the interpretation of what is determined to be "appropriate" and which services needed by the student can or cannot be offered within the general education environment.

Furthermore, it firmly establishes the general education environment as basis for what constitutes a LRE (IDEA, 2004; Taylor, 1988). These decisions are made via the special education continuum of services (see Appendix A), which is a feature of the IDEIA (2004) legislation that is used to determine a program of service for a student with a disability label. The continuum is designed to move students along a range of services and programs that are organized from least to most restrictive. Similarly, family court judges use a continuum of placement during juvenile justice proceedings to determine the program of service for court involved youth (see Appendix B). Here we see, though both continuums determine a program of service, each is almost always tied to a specific place/space.

In the current conceptualization of both continua, the mainstream environment (in the case of schools, the general education environment) is considered to be the least restrictive and a hospital or home school setting the most restrictive. In the area of special education programs, the continuum presents several conceptual problems for how these programs and services are conceived and in turn delivered. In recent years, the special education continuum has received critique from scholars (Nisbet, 2004; Rueda, Gallego, & Moll, 2000; Taylor 1988, 2001, 2004) for many reasons. One that most directly relates this dissertation study has to do with the ongoing conflation of service and place. An important critique made by Taylor (1988) is the emphasis on "readiness." Nesbit (2004) states: "Children in self-contained classrooms do not move to inclusive educational environments, not because of lack of ability, but because of structural belief systems that exist within organizations—that is, some students belong and some do not" (p. 234).

Herein lies a fundamental problem of thinking about special education or court involvement as a service along a continuum: the idea that young persons must prove their abilities (Taylor, 1988) instead of being presumed competent (Biklen & Burke, 2006) highlights an institutional practice of schooling rooted in eugenical thinking (Baynton, 2001; Davis, 2006; Snyder & Mitchell, 2006). This "medical model" of disability is also used as the rationale for developing and maintaining special education programs and services, viewing the spaces where special education services are provided as remedial places for fixing children. The medical model of disability (Davis, 2006; Valle & Connor, 2010; Zola, 1988) places the "problem" that must be "fixed" within a person with a disability label. This is similar to how young people who had interactions with the legal system were viewed at the beginning of the twentieth century, often being labeled

"backward" and laggardly" because they engaged in criminal behavior (e.g., breaking laws) (Bissel-Brown, 1990; Lesko, 2012). Today, the term "court-involved" refers to a young person who either, due to abuse or neglect, is dependent on the courts (e.g., foster care system) or involved in the juvenile justice system because of delinquent behavior (www.jlc.org, n.d.).

If we view inclusive education as a struggle (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007) and as a way of thinking that includes orientations towards democracy, and if also, we gain a critical understanding of the historical exclusion of peoples labeled disabled (Danforth & Naraian, 2015) we begin to understand "inclusive education" as a "stance". Thinking of inclusive education as a stance allows researchers to note that it is not a place but instead an orientation, a way of thinking (what I am calling a stance), that one brings to all aspects of one's practice and philosophy of teaching. From this standpoint, critical spatial theory is quite helpful in showing us that inclusive spaces are potentially everywhere; what matters is how we (humans) construct and maintain their boundaries. This makes problematic the labeling of a specific classroom (or environment) as more or less restrictive. From a spatial perspective, if we determine that a space, such as the general education classroom, is more inclusive because of the time spent with peers and access provided there to the general education curriculum, then we make the assumption that any space labeled "general education" is automatically more inclusive. Graham & Slee (2011) refer to this as the "illusory interiority" of inclusive education; inclusive educators who argue for the "inclusion" of students with disabilities into general education classes are arguing for moving students into spaces that predetermined to be less restrictive which is equated with a more beneficial educational experience. This means that the term

least restrictive environment and the criteria for determining delivery of services remains bound to place in troubling ways that are under researched and theorized in the literature.

Critical spatial theorists demonstrate that spaces are dynamic (Harvey, 2012; Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 1989) and their meaning shifts through time (Massey, 2005, McKittrick, 2006). Furthermore, spaces take on different meanings for different people (Massey, 2005). Therefore, when we assume the general education classroom to be the least restrictive, we run the risk of erasing the lived experiences of young people in those spaces who do not experience inclusivity if they are not incorporated in meaningful and authentic ways in the general education classroom (Lehman & Lava, 2013). Similarly, if we deem a space (often the general education classroom) appropriate for a young person returning from being educated at a juvenile justice facility, are we considering the space into which the young person is re-entering? (Burns-Thomas, 2014).

If we take inclusive education seriously as a project for re-conceptualizing education for all people then we must consider the spaces themselves and their shifting meanings. The current way of "doing" inclusive education in many US public schools includes re-imagining the spaces where a young person is receiving their educational services. Still, many schools and programs are set up (due the nature of LRE and the continuum of services) to provide specialized educational services in a specific place. Most often, this place is outside of the general education classroom and deemed to have rehabilitative properties (Slee, 2010; Valle & Connor, 2010). Therefore, research that draws on the lived experiences of people in restricted educational programs is needed to understand more clearly how policies of inclusion and exclusion are not only enacted, but lived by the people inhabiting those spaces.

Rationale

Given the taken-for-granted fixed linkage between learning and particular spaces as *the* place to remediate, rehabilitate or "fix" a young person, critical spatial theory allows for the study of the day-to-day experiences in restricted educational programs. In addition, it has the potential to deepen our understanding of how schooling spaces, assumed to be static, are in fact dynamic spaces, constructed and reconstructed by the people inhabiting them across their educational career. By designing a qualitative study that is an ethnographic narrative inquiry, this project describes restricted educational programs from the perspectives of the people who occupy them. This study draws on the words and experiences of participants within restricted educational programs to explore what a concerted focus on the spatial dimension illuminates about these spaces and youth learning. Taking an iterative approach to the data collection process allows the researcher to study alongside educators who work with young people with disabilities and young people who are court involved in restrictive educational programs. It allows for an understanding of how these educators come to understand disability, and how this understanding of disability informs their pedagogy (Gabel, 2005).

With growing support of inclusive education, many self-advocates and advocates for people with disabilities demand that the exclusionary practices of special education be eradicated. Building on research that studies the individual's experience across educational spaces (Bogdan & Kugelmass, 1984; Naraian, 2010; Smith, 2007) I used the Disability studies in education (DSE) framework while also taking up the lens of critical spatial theory to understand why restricted educational programs continue to exist across

the entire United States education system. As many public school districts (and some independent schools) across the U.S. move to inclusive models of teaching and learning, which emphasize placing all students together in one classroom to receive their educational services, the under-researched importance of the spaces *where* this education is happening matters. Furthermore, taking up a lens of critical spatial theory alongside a DSE framework fundamentally questions the lack of recognition within the inclusive education scholarship, of the fluid nature of space for resolving the "inclusion as place" quandary.

Building on the work of DSE scholars such as Smith (2007) and Gabel et al. (2013), restricted educational programs are already viewed as playing a part in the identity making of young people within those spaces. In this dissertation, I extend this research by investigating how people and spaces construct each other. Therefore, this project makes a nuanced argument: while not actively advocating for exclusionary educational practices segregation or isolation, it views restrictive educational programs as producing forms of knowledge that are useful to understanding how to facilitate movements towards inclusive educational practices for all students, including those with disability labels and court involved youth.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative ethnographic narrative inquiry is to privilege spatiality while investigating the lived experiences of educators, young people with disability labels and young people who are court involved within two separate restrictive educational programs. Drawing on a Disability studies in education framework with a lens of critical spatial theory along with narrative and spatial methods this study inquires into the social and educational encounters within restricted educational programs. The following research questions have been developed for this study:

Research Questions

- What kinds of educational experiences occur within spaces that are labeled as restrictive?
    - How do people within these spaces take up conceptions of ability and disability?
- What kinds of social interactions take place within these restrictive spaces?
    - What types of interactions characterize the relationship between teachers and students?
- How are restrictive educational spaces experienced by the people (educators, students, staff and families) who inhabit them?

- How do they (educators, students, staff and families) describe their understanding of the activities of teaching and learning within these spaces?
- How do they (educators, students, staff and families) describe themselves in relation to these spaces?

Significance

Educational outcomes for students with disabilities and court involved youth continues to be an under researched area in the research landscape. If inclusive education appears to be *the way* to make good on a promise initiated by the 1975 legislation, then educational researchers need to further study the ways inclusive education (as it is currently conceptualized) relies heavily on educational spaces as static. A dynamic understanding of educational spaces aids inclusive education writ large specifically in how to restructure the educational system, which ultimately hinges upon our understanding of space and place.

The initial advertising campaign for the NYC Teaching Fellows advertising campaign led with the phrase, “You remember your first grade teachers name? Who will remember yours?” (NYC Teaching Fellows, 2004). This slogan, which relies on educational kitsch (Greene, 1987) to encourage people to apply to their program, hits upon a salient point about individual and collective memories that is significant to this project. When I ask preservice teachers, “What’s a really great memory from school (as a student or as a teacher) you still remember today?” and “What’s a really bad memory

from school (as a student or as a teacher) you still remember today?" I am not surprised by the fact that most preservice teachers choose a memory from their own K-12 schooling years and how real the memories feel again in the moment they are shared. Most importantly I am struck by how often those memories are tied to a specific a schooling space, such as the lunchroom, the classroom, the library, or during passing period in the hallway. Bringing back the Massey (2005) quote from above (p. 17, this document), "I want to argue that space is equally exhilarating and threatening" (p. 59).

The places where people learn matter and the people with whom one shares those space also matter. We often send students with complex disabilities to the margins (e.g., a restricted educational program) to address the young person's perceived academic or social/emotional deficits (Carlson, 2005). A similar pattern is enacted with court involved youth. We must, therefore, continue to conduct research in these spaces to understand what happens there, who is there, and how these restricted educational programs are constructed (Rose, Meyers & Hitchcock, 2005).

This points towards the importance of a research project that studies what is happening in restricted educational programs as another way to understand the inclusive education movement. As it gains traction in current educational reform, this movement also begs educational researchers to retrace our ideological commitments and understand how we have arrived at the place we are today. The impact of what happens in educational spaces has a lasting and profound effect on the lived experiences of people within these spaces. This must be further studied in order to understand why these restricted educational programs continue to exist and how to lift up and unearth the stories of what happens for the educators and young people in these space/places. As

Frank (2010) states "a collection of stories to grow with" (p. 7) the collection and analysis of these stories opens up an area of scholarship to explore *with* those inhabiting restricted educational programs and theorize from their experiences to better understand the dynamic nature of space(s) and why it is essential to the inclusive education movement.

Use of Terms

Throughout this document I make use of a variety of terms to refer to the labels, such as, disability and court involvement. I use the terms: "young person with a disability label," "disabled young person," "person who identifies as disabled" and/or "person with a labeled disability" interchangeably. This is done as a response to Titchkosky's (2011) discussion of "person first language," which is the norm for academic writing on and about disability. Titchkosky (2011) states, "In insisting that 'I am a person first," disability is once again formed as a condition attached to persons." (p. 22) My use of person-first and label-first language interchangeably comes from my lived experience in community with disabled people asserting their desire to self-identify. This comes specifically from the ADAPT (Americans Disabled Attendant Programs Today) organization via social media sites, such as Twitter, where disabled activists often say: "please ask me if I prefer person-first or label-first language." During data collection I asked my research participants how they would like to be discussed and identified (person first or label first, or perhaps neither) and use that language in the Chapters IV

and V. In these initial chapters to highlight the potential fluidity of language from within the Disability rights community, I use these terms intentionally in various iterations.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Spaces are incredibly important in discussions about the inclusive education movement. I trace this back to the use of the word environment from the least restrictive environment feature of IDEA legislation (2004). Trent (1994) demonstrates through his discussion of intellectual disability and institutionalization that there has always been an emphasis in North America to send away and then contain people we do not understand and cannot help in a "normal" fashion. This history of the pathologizing of disability in the United States is why space becomes such an important aspect of this discussion. It is reflected in the LRE IDEA reporting data from Chapter I; the fact that some young people are educated in "other settings" this makes me wonder about these young people and their stories. First, I develop a theoretical framework, weaving together the Disability Studies in Education framework with the lens of critical spatial theory to orient myself, and my reader towards how I take up this inquiry. Then, I review current literature from the field to focus on research pertaining to restricted educational programs vis-à-vis the fields of inclusive education and juvenile justice.

Disability Studies

Disability Studies (DS) as an academic field radically shifted the traditional discourse around disability in the university. Until that point, research and scholarship in academia about disability and ability was traditionally housed in the medical field, e.g.,

psychology, human health and behavioral sciences (Ferguson & Nussbaum, 2012). Disability studies scholars, many of whom, identify as disabled, called into question through their scholarship, the assumption that disability is solely a biological category. This orientation towards disability and ability dominated the medical and psychological fields of study as DS developed (Baker, 2002; Canguilhem, 1968/1989). A recent field of study, DS is now well established (Garland-Thompson, 2013) and in the last few decades, the field has developed steadily as many scholars, disabled and nondisabled, use DS informed theories and concepts to guide their research and writing.

While the fields of inquiry DS scholars take up is growing, it also remains connected to the central tenet of disability as social (Ferguson & Nussbaum, 2012), and centering disability as one way to theorize and understand the human experience. As a theoretical tradition, DS has been flexibly situated in the social sciences (Asch & Wasserman, 2005; Oliver, Sapey, & Thomas, 2012; Siebers, 2008; Zola, 1988), philosophy (Barnes, 2014; Canguilheim, 1968/1989; Carlson, 2009, 2010; Kittay, 1999, 2001), literature (Adams, 2014; Berube, 1998; Davis, 2013; Kent, 2000; Mairs, 1996; Mitchell & Snyder, 2014) and the arts (Linton, 1998). Given the way many institutions of higher education (especially in the North American context) privilege intellect, DS engages with other disciplines of academe to fundamentally question, how ability is constructed in order to consider concepts such as access, participation, engagement and communication for all people. This privileging of intellect is referred to by Siebers (2008) as part of the "ideology of ability" (p. 8). Siebers argues that our entire society and way of thinking is based on an ideology that the best and most productive members of society are those who are able-bodied, and display rationality in ways we have accepted as

"normal". Theoretical work in the DS field actively interrogates models of disability and ability that operate from a medical definition to questions terms, such as, "normal".

As a scholarly field, DS developed in the academy at the same time as the Disability rights movement (Davis, 2016). The Disability rights movement was supported and propelled by people who identify as disabled, their families and supporters. The central tenet of the Disability rights movement was to advocate for access (Yell, 2010). The slogan: "Nothing About Us, Without Us" was a clarion call of the movement, addressing the atrocious history of the treatment of disabled people, especially from the medical and psychological research fields (Davis, 2016). The resulting United States legislation, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), remains one of the largest shifts in thinking on the U.S. political stage, in terms of how disability is conceptualized, in the United States. The ADA privileges the idea of providing access to spaces there were previously inaccessible (Charlton, 1998). While DS is sometimes referred to as the scholarly branch of the Disability rights movement, most important to the work of DS scholars is the insight that this research has provided about disability as a social construction. This is referred to as the social model of disability (Oliver, 1983).

The social model relies upon the distinction between impairment and disability. "Impairment is the physical fact of lacking an arm or a leg. Disability is the social process that turns an impairment into a negative by creating barriers to access" (Davis, 2013*,* p. 265). The social model of disability states that the given environment is what does, or does not, produce the disabling condition. The example often used is: a wheelchair user enters a building with a ramp and in that moment does not experience her impairment as a disability because the ramp mitigates physical barriers (such as steps)

which allow her to enter with ease. When the same person using a wheel chair encounters a building that has no ramp, only stairs, in that moment, the wheel chair user becomes socially constructed as disabled by the fact that the physical environment limits her access to the building. Still, this example is too simplistic for many DS scholars (Abrams, 2016; Michalko, 2001; Siebers, 2008). These scholars note that at no point is the person using a wheelchair not socially constructed as disabled. This is because of the deeply entrenched ways our society pathologizes disability and historically views it as an inherent deficit located within a person that must be fixed (Canguilheim, 1969/1989; Zola, 1988).

Proponents of the social model often call into question the social construction of terms such as "normal" (Dudley-Marling, 2004; Dudley-Marling & Gurn, 2010; Garland-Thomson, 2013; Sleeter, 1986). In order to illustrate how "disabled people continue to reside at the margins of civic life because we not only allow it, but also because we create, enforce and sustain disability" (Slee, 2011, p. 36). As Brantlinger (2006) aptly stated, "winners need losers" (p. 197). DS scholarship highlights how our society accepts how "normal" is defined because it provides a sense of security against the ontological dilemma that we (humans) are all susceptible to experiencing a disability or impairment at some point during our lifespan. Various DS scholars make this point in using the term "temporarily able bodied" (Garland-Thomson, 1997) to address this fact. Calling forth the notion that disability is the one identity category that any person may experience at any point during their lifetime (Garland-Thomson, 2013; Siebers, 2008). Disabled rights activists use of the term "temporarily able-bodied" (TAB) to refer to a nondisabled person (Brueggemann, Feldmeier-White, Dunn, Heifferon & Cheu, 2001).

Mitchell & Snyder (2014) document this fear of disablement through an analysis of Western literature and show how characters with disabilities and impairments are used as devices in literature to reinforce and remind us of the fragility of human life. Hahn (1988) suggests this fear is tied to both "existential and aesthetic anxieties" which force humans to consider their mortality and physical appearance. Some DS scholars argue that it is this fear of the inevitable (our own demise) that is part of why we work to define and understand disability as a deficit and lack (Garland-Thomson, 2013; Siebers, 2008).

The social model of disability, then, is generative in that it allows scholars to re-conceptualize difference and human variation in a way that presumes competence (Biklen & Burke, 2006) and views human difference as a value and not a problem that should be fixed. In general, the medical model of disability (Davis, 2013; Valle & Connor, 2010; Zola, 1988) places the "problem" that must be "fixed" within a person with a disability label. Some researchers from the traditional special education base are critical of the social model of disability because they perceive this model as actively working against their conceptualization of disability as a pathologized condition that must be remedied (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2011). Similar to DS scholars who problematize the social model, Anastasiou & Kauffman (2011) point out that the social model, by privileging physical disability, leaves out the experiences of those with "intellectual disabilities, autism, sensory disabilities and emotional and behavioral disabilities" (p. 367). Anastasiou & Kauffman (2011) raise an important point, that if people with disability labels are not viewed as in need of help and support, then society may no longer seek avenues (ADA legislation, IDEA legislation) to support those who identify as disabled (p. 372). Their argument, though compelling, remains in support of special education

programs and services, which continue to segregate and exclude some students, often using disability labels as the rationale for the continued exclusion along with other identities such as race, class and gender (Annamma, Connor & Ferri, 2016; Erevelles, 2011). In the following pages, I show that across the literature, there is a pattern of specific spaces and places being defined by their perceived ability to provide remediation or rehabilitation to people who are deemed to be lacking, either due to disability or legal infraction.

Across history, society has generally accepted the positioning of people with disability labels as deficit or deficient (Charlton, 1998). “People with labeled disabilities have been locked away, abandoned at birth, banished from society, institutionalized, and euthanized” (Kunc, 2006). These acts are often taken up under the mantle of care via medical support, such as when a doctor recommends a young mother choose to abort her fetus with Down syndrome because the doctor assumes the unborn fetus will not have a good quality of life (Wong, 2002). At its core DS invites researchers and scholars to “recognize that disability is a key aspect of human experience, and that disability has important political, social, and economic implications for society as a whole, including both disabled and nondisabled people” (Society of Disability Studies, as cited in Ferguson & Nussbaum, 2012, p. 71). For this project, I follow the definitions developed by Ferguson & Nussbaum (2012) that historically, “Disability Studies reflected the efforts of scholars with disabilities (and some nondisabled colleagues) to conceptualize and interpret the common complaints of people with disabilities and their families” (Ferguson & Nussbaum, 2012, p. 71). Disability rights advocates and by extension, DS scholars recognize the system(s) they are advocating for access to is imperfect; yet, it

remains a basic right, which must be provided to all people. In this way, the pursuit of access to the general education classroom space mirrors the overall arc of the Disability rights movement.

Due to the growth of the DS field in recent years there has been a push to move away from the "pure social model" of disability (Davis, 2000). The "pure social model" is a term used by DS scholars who argue disability is socially constructed without regard to material factors (such as class, gender and race). The "pure social model" is critiqued for tending to eschew the lived realities of disabled people (Davis, 2000; Goodley, 1999, 2001). The "pure social model" appears to suggest that disabled people who use their own personal experience to understand and define their lives as disabled are embedded within a system of constructed discourses. While Disability activists often state the Disability rights movement slogan: "Nothing about us without us", often DS-informed work that uses philosophers of difference (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004; Foucault, 1977) runs the risk of silencing some disabled people.

Still, many DS scholars identify as disabled and draw from their own experience of being disabled to theorize about disability (Garland-Thomson, 1997; Oliver, 1983; Siebers, 2008; Zola, 1988). Though the social model was in part developed by a disabled scholar (Oliver, 1983) DS disabled scholars now stress their own personal experience with impairment and disability as a complication to the "pure social model" (Michalko, 2001; Siebers, 2008). Goodley (2001) introduces this idea, to push back on the "pure social model" after spending time researching alongside self-advocacy groups in the United Kingdom. As a result, in recent years, DS scholars are starting to develop alternative models of disability that resist the binary implied by the medical and social

models (Abrams, 2016; Erevelles, 2011; Gabel, 2006; Goodley, 1999; Siebers, 2008). One reason is related to Sieber's (2008) discussion of the Disability rights movements and how it privileged and fore-fronted people with mobility disabilities. The decision to emphasize mobility disabilities is critiqued as one way disabled people with mobility impairments distance disabled people with cognitive and multiple disabilities from the rights movement (Bone, 2017; Charlton, 2010). As discussed, the ADA's (Davis, 2016; Yell, 2010) main tenet was access, but as some DS scholars point out, this was mostly taken up as physical access (Titchkosky, 2011). This definition of access (with an emphasis on the physical) is too narrow and leaves those with intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities and other cognitive impairments continuing to seek more than physical access.

Most recently, DS scholars (Abrams, 2016; Bone, 2017) problematize the medical model/social model binary, noting that while the social model brings us the important distinction of not locating an impairment within a person, it does not work to address the various attitudes and assumptions that general society continues to use to position and consider disability and ability. Current work in the field aims to use scholarly writing and research from a DS orientation to transgress the binary discourses of ability and disability, which remain a hallmark of the field. Bone (2017) notes, "This binary is still a critical construct in disability frameworks, including Crip theory, which examine the tensions between able-bodied and disability" (pp. 3-4). Abrams (2016) addresses this as Cartesian dualism, within which the medical/social model appears to be trapped. Abrams (2016) states,

> The source of the social model's '*dis*ease' was its reliance on physical disability as an ideal type. Yes, so long as we restrict ourselves to persons with spinal cord injury and

> their physical exclusion from society, then the impairment/disability dichotomy is both convincing and emancipatory. But when we consider other cases of impairment (such as fibromyalgia), when we [consider] what it *means* to be excluded or included (Paterson, 2012; Abrams, 2014), when disabled persons *want* to talk about tragedy (Abrams, 2014) when disabled people *want to* organize around their individual impairments (Shakespeare, 2012) – in each of these moments, the social model loses its purchase. (p. 121)

Abrams (2016) appears to draw from Siebers (2008) theory of "complex embodiment", which states "while identities are socially constructed, they are nevertheless meaningful and real precisely because they are complexly embodied" (p. 30). The theory of complex embodiment highlights the lived realities associated with having a disability label that is only weakly addressed within either the medical or social model (Abrams, 2016; Bone, 2017; Carlson, 2009; Erevelles, 2011; Gabel, 2006). Following Siebers, I consider disabled identities to be real because they are attached to human bodies and lived out through the existence of the person. Gabel (2002) makes a related claim in her discussion of disability as an aesthetic that is rooted in a person's experience (p. 182). Embodiment is a helpful way of conceptualizing disability because it opens up pathways for inquiry that let us (scholars and activists, disabled and non-disabled) think about disability in ways mind/body dualism does not (Abrams, 2016). Furthermore, it encourages scholars to seek ways to understand how lived realities cut across other identity categories such as race, gender, and class (Blanchett, Harry & Klinger, 2009; Erevelles, 2000). Finally, and most importantly, it is this orientation of DS which allows me as the researcher to privilege the lived experiences of my research participants.

Disability Studies in Education

Disability studies in education (DSE), refers to the group of scholars who take up the DS theories to understand and study education. Gabel (2005) states,

> Disability studies in education is concerned with issues and problems of education, broadly constructed, that affect or are affected by disablement in educational contexts. DSE is primarily concerned with the view of issues and problems as defined by disabled people and as they relate to social exclusion and oppression. (p. 17)

Many DSE scholars address "issues and problems" through the use of deconstruction theories (Gallagher, 2006) to uncover and show that there are various models for conceptualizing disability. Similar to DS scholars some DSE scholars use deconstruction theory (Derrida, 1967) as one potential way to locate the hinges of how these ideas, such as traditional special education discourse, are held together, and to trace how ideologies of difference move from beliefs to be inscribed in daily practice (Gallagher, 2006). Yet, as I show in this chapter, often DSE scholars who rely solely on deconstruction as a means to provide an analysis of the systems of inclusion and exclusion also take up the "pure social model" of disability (Allan, 2006; Baglieri, Bejoian, Broderick, Connor, & Valle, 2011; Slee, 2011). This privileging of disability as a social construction falls short of addressing the ways in which a specific disability label (e.g., intellectual disability) is taken up or further marginalized through this process of theorizing (Davis, 2000). Similar to the way mobility disabilities were fore fronted in the Disability rights movement and foundational to DS scholarship, when DSE researchers discuss who is included, in a classroom setting, often a conceptualization of physical access is employed (Valle & Connor, 2010). As I discuss in more detail later in the chapter, this concept of inclusion is

predicated on the idea that access to the general education is the goal for all people.

Many of the DSE social constructionists use theories of difference to argue for a re-imagined system of education that provides flexibility for all peoples (disabled or not) to be educated together (Allan, 2006). Slee (2011) adds to this discussion when he writes about the possibilities afforded by DSE, helping us understand how curriculum and schools are constructed as a means of understanding how to dismantle and create a new way of educating all people. Of course, this means DS/DSE scholars continue to debate how ability and disability are conceptualized from within their own field. In fact, while at times frustrating, this ongoing conversation is part of the vitality of the field. Barton (2013) states,

> Efforts to understand exclusionary and disabling barriers and especially their institutionalized forms, to develop an agenda and strategies for change, to establish alternative values and priorities will involve conflicts and can never be a smooth and untroubled process. It is a learning experience that will entail creative, constructive, disturbing, conflictual and emotionally draining elements. (p. 6)

This inherent flexibility for new research and ideas that seek to establish radical change remains an underlying commitment for many scholars who view DS/DSE as their theoretical home. These entanglements, disagreements and discussions from alternating perspectives remain an active part of the DS/DSE scholarly tradition. It is the continued centering of ability and disability in these debates and conversations that helps the DS/DSE field remain radical, in that no other theoretical field (currently) in the academic setting provides tools and methods for thinking, writing and researching about ability that moves beyond understanding it as a biological category.

Ultimately, this is the longer arc of the work of DSE, to understand the multiple expressions of disability and impairment, and how the range of individual experiences informs the larger project of inclusive education.

Critical Spatial Theory

The interdisciplinary affordances of the DS/DSE theoretical traditions are helpful in providing additional pathways for theorizing how the lived experience of ability and disability may be understood. As I suggest, there are a variety of disability labels and categories and as Davis (2016) points out, "disability is the largest minority" (p. 3) which means that all lived experiences of disability are not synonymous. Using the DSE framework alongside critical spatial theory allows me to attend to the nuances of a phenomenon, which a DSE framework on its own does not allow me to fully discuss. The lens of critical spatial theory when used within a DSE framework, allows me to attend to the diverse population of people with disability labels, while simultaneously attending to the spatialized outcomes that are shared by people labeled as disabled as well as people who are labeled deviant due to infraction (possibly arrest) with the law.

Integrating the lens of critical spatial theory to a DSE framework was crucial to the theoretical framing of this project. The lens of critical spatial theory allowed for an attention to how spaces highlight intersections and provide moments of disruption. Using critical spatial theory allowed me to emphasize the local, lived experience in a given space, as a potential starting point of meaning making for this study. By considering spaces that are labeled restrictive, I used the DSE framework with the lens of critical

spatial theory to understand how restricted programs are constructed and maintained, *from* the lived experiences of people within these spaces. By considering two different restricted educational programs, I point towards an understanding of space as fluid and dynamic. I show that the spatial dimension is worthy of continued study as a method for understanding how lived experience informs spaces and the people within them. Also, using DSE and critical spatial theory together allowed me to forefront the spatial dimension as one way to consider why the dominant story about disability in our U.S. society remains tethered to deficit assumptions, specifically about intellectual and emotional disability labels.

The foundations of critical spatial theory come from the writings of Henri Lefebvre (1991) who, in response to Marx and Engels (1978), introduced the idea that spaces are produced in a way that is not tied to capital but to the production of social processes. Though the study of social processes as a means to understand peoples' actions has a long history in fields such as sociology, psychology and cultural anthropology (Massey, 2005), Lefebvre critiques the lack of attention paid to the spaces themselves that people occupy and how those spaces are produced. Lefebvre (1991) developed his theory to address the multiplicity of ideas, thoughts and ways of being, that coexist side by side, in a given space. This is especially apparent in a city environment, where there is often high population density. When there are more people, living closer together, there are more social processes and in turn, more spaces are established. Lefebvre grounds his theory on the concept of the right to the city, meaning that all inhabitants of a space that share governance (e.g., a city) should have equal access to the resources therein.

Lefebvre describes three ways space is conceptualized, which is later collectively referred to as the trialectics of space by Soja (1986). Lefebvre's spatial triad provides a way to understand how people interact with space. First, there is the perceived space (espace percu), the way people envision and imagine a space, (blueprints and city planners); then, there is the built environment (espace concu), which is how the perceived space is then built (contractors and builders).[1] The third part of Lefebvre's spatial triad is lived space (espace vercu), which is brought from imagination to a "reality", i.e. the lives that are carried out in the spaces which have been perceived and then built (p. 142). Space matters because though a built environment may be thought of as "fixed", it is actually the dynamic social processes, which create a "lived" or social space. This demonstrates how space is "an open ongoing production" (Massey, 2005, p. 55). Soja (1989) building on Lefebvre's work to further refine the three- dimensional quality of space, agrees that "spatiality is socially produced" and "exists in both substantial forms and as a set of relations between individuals and groups" noting space is an "embodiment and a medium of social life itself" (p. 120).

McKittrick (2006) and Massey (2005) provide other considerations to the theories Lefebvre (1991), and Soja (1989) developed to understand spaces as dynamic. Massey (2005) points out that especially for Soja, the emphasis in his work is about how little attention is paid to the importance of space in the research landscape (p. 18). Massey agrees that while space has not always been considered, it is more compelling for researchers to study the spaces themselves and more importantly, "how we [humans]

[1] I find it a compelling aside that rarely do the people who perceive a space create the built environment. This may be the kernel of an idea that comes up later in the study.

imagine space" (p. 18). This was Lefebvre's main project as well; to understand how lived space is constructed and maintained by people through their social processes.

Following Lefebvre (1991) and Soja (1989) that spaces are dynamic, Massey (2005) points out space is both an activity and a representation (p. 23). Armstrong (2003) citing Massey (1994) states, "'the social and spatial are inseparable'" (Massey, 1994, p. 254). This idea connects to Massey's argument that "'space is constituted through social relations and material social practices' and that relationships are formed through the 'defining of places through human experience, social practice and struggle'" (Massey, 1994, p. 250 as cited in Armstrong, 2003, p. 28). From this standpoint, space and time are both representations and realities. Furthermore, while people move in and out of physical spaces on a daily basis, space is also experienced as a representation (Soja, 1996). This suggests that an individuals' lived experience is both acting and acted upon by each vertex of the spatial triad.

As an example, McKittrick's (2006) discusses a slave auction block at Green Hill Plantation in Virginia, troubling the notion of space, time and representation, noting that socio-spatial representations take on different meanings, for a variety of different reasons, often connected to an individuals lived experience. McKittrick (2006) states,

> While the Green Hill auction block is empty—unoccupied, product-less and apparently, story-less – its expressive potential demonstrates the ways in which a physical geography can be mediated by the space of the subject: the body, the self, identity and subjectivity. (p. 68)

McKittrick (2006) is suggesting, through the example of the slave auction block, that the same geographic location potentially means different things for people in and out of time. The socio-political lens of the person informs the action of *how* the auction block is approached. This interaction may occur in and around the same geo-physical location, but

meaning is made as a person intersects with their own historical/contextual understanding *and* the material artifact. McKittrick (2006) states, "Our imagination can fill the empty space and recover the undocumented. We give this site its peopled history and stories" (p. 68). McKittrick's auction block analysis helps us to understand, with a strong example, how a historical artifact has a multitude of meanings across time. McKittrick also shows how identity, labels and the resulting lived material realities create different spatial interactions with the slave auction block. For myself (a white woman) it is a wholly different socio-spatial interaction that for my friend who identifies as a Black woman. It is through our own lived experiences and the discourses within which our lived experiences are subsumed that we interact with a material artifact (such as the auction block) both in and out of time. Showing that each time the auction block is interacted with there is the potential for the creation of a new space, which remains rooted simultaneously in the historical context of the grave human atrocities committed there.

Furthermore, McKittrick's (2006) example demonstrates how geography (place) and social processes remain inextricably linked (p. 68). This nature of space as dynamic, but relying on stasis (Massey, 2005, p. 23) suggests why educational philosophers and researchers have been hesitant to add this dimension to their research. The auction block is a helpful example to understand how time and space are entangled. As well as, how a time or space is interpreted (either in the present moment, or looking back through history), what I refer to as in and out of time. By taking into account McKittrick's auction block, there is a potential of understanding time/space as a "this" *and* "that." In that regard, the social processes, which produce a space occur simultaneously, it is not "this"

or "that," which is often how we conceive of time and space but a fluid "*this* AND *that*." In her discussion of "place-narratives" Massey (1994) makes a similar observation:

> All these relations interact with and take a further element of specificity from the accumulated history of a place, with that history itself imagined as the product of layer upon layer of different sets of linkages, both local and to the wider world. (p. 21)

As McKittrick (2006) suggests, though spaces are dynamic, their connection to geography impacts how spaces may be marked, bounded and understood through social processes. Massey (2005) states, "It is an old association; over and over we tame the spatial into the textual and the conceptual; into representation, we spatialize time" (p. 20). This coupling of space and time, which is sometimes referred to in philosophical literature as space/time (Massey, 2005) highlights how the two concepts are often theorized together. Part of Massey's (2005) argument is to show that space and time, while always related are not the same. Massey (2005) states,

> For if experience is not an internalized succession of sensations (pure temporality) but a multiplicity of things and relations, then its spatiality is as significant as its temporal dimension. This is to argue for a way of being and thinking otherwise—for the imagination of a more open attitude of being; for the (potential) outwardlookingness of practiced subjectivity. (p. 58)

Space is more than a representation as Lefebvre (1991), Soja (1989) and Harvey (2012) each suggest, but Massey's point is that feminist scholars and geographers have discussed this tension, of representation, without necessarily locating it in the spatial dimension (Lather, 2007). Therefore, it is necessary, when taking up the lens of critical spatial theory to discuss representation and the idea of how spaces are represented to us.

It is this notion of the trialectics of space and how this produces certain relations that is integral to understanding critical spatial theory. Soja (1989) argues that while spaces are produced in similar ways, often it is people and their social relationships that

maintain a specific space in a specific time. Similar to Lefebvre's spatial triad, firstspace, is the representation, what you see on a map, or how you perceive land from a vantage point (e.g. looking out a window from a tall building); secondspace is how the firstspace is conceptualized (built environment). Soja's description of thirdspace crystallizes what Lefebvre suggests with lived space, thirdspace is the day-to-day inter- and intra-actions of people and objects, which establishes a social space.

Harvey (2012) argues space is heterotopic; using Lefebvre's definition, Harvey (2012) states, "Lefebvre's concept of heterotopia (radically different from that of Foucault (1976)) delineates liminal social spaces of possibility where 'something different' is not only possible, but foundational for the defining of revolutionary trajectories" (p. xvii). Foucault (1984) describes heterotopia in relation to his definitions of utopia and dystopia. In accordance with Lefebvre (1991) Foucault views space as something that is always being produced. To Foucault spaces are heterotopic because a given space, e.g., a classroom, holds layers of meaning and relationships to other places, which are embedded within the space and not immediately recognized (Foucault, 1984). These layers are only understood when a space is held still and the layers of meaning are then studied (Foucault, 1984). Implicit in this way of theorizing heterotopia is the idea that spaces can be perceived as fixed, in order to be studied and understood. Lefebvre's definition of heterotopia (cf. Harvey, 2012) places the emphasis on the dynamic social processes which construct a space. This is complimentary to Soja's definition of thirdspace.

While it is tempting to perceive of space as fixed in order to study the social processes and take a genealogical approach, I read Massey (2005) and McKittrick (2006)

as cautioning against this impulse. When researchers attend to the spatial dimension of inquiry as a dynamic process of construction, maintenance and deconstruction, then space remains located in possibility. Critical spatial theory has the potential for understanding spaces as flexible enough to endure this dynamic process of change. Soja (1989) refers to this as thirdspace, which is conceptualized as always occurring and always incorporating first and second space. I interpret this to mean that the heterotopia Harvey (2012) discusses exists within the third space, but emphasizes the dynamic and unpredictable nature of human interactions (social processes), which produce and maintain lived spaces. In this sense, all spaces are heterotopias, but the nature of third (or lived) space is not always fully understood or elaborated within the spatial research literature (Massey, 2005).

Soja (2010) calls forth this revolutionary aspect of the social processes in thirdspace when he calls for critical spatial (in) justice theory. Noting that spaces are often developed in uneven ways, that result in an unfair distribution of materials, like money and resources. Applying spatial analysis to large city environments not only helps us to understand the social processes producing space, but the resulting inequities due to the uneven flow of goods across spaces (Soja, 2010, p. 32). Post colonialism is one of the examples Soja cites to help elaborate on this idea. Discussing the work of Said (1993), Soja (2010) states, “Said’s contributions expand on and explain how the political organization of space, through its material manifestations as well as representational imagery, produces oppressive and unjust geographies” (p. 37). Similar to Harvey (2012), Soja (2010) acknowledges, “it is important to remember this double-sidedness, how the

spatiality of (in) justice can be both intensely oppressive and potentially liberating" (p. 37).

Following Soja (2010) I argue that a space labeled "restricted" is then always becoming (more or less) restricted throughout time based, in part, on who inhabits the space. This is how the lens of critical spatial theory when taken up within the DSE framework offers new lines of inquiry. The lens of critical spatial theory along with a DSE framework deeply troubles the concept of access beyond the physical, which is rarely addressed in the research literature from the DSE or critical spatial theory fields, save for Waitoller & Annamma (2017) who discuss the "spatial turn" inclusive education and spatial justice. To highlight how these theories work together I first offer a brief history of restricted educational programs.

History of Restricted Educational Programs

Institutions (medical and prisons)

Trent (1994) provides an in depth analysis of the creation and maintenance of institutions during the 20th century in the United States. Ben-Moshe, Carey & Chapman (2014) build on his work to show the connection between medical institutions and prisons. They state,

> Although there were widely divergent effects on the groups incarcerated in these various settings…they loosely share a structure of political rationality: under

> the right conditions, imposed from above, degenerate, disabled, criminalistics, or uncivilized peoples can be brought "up" to normative standards. Theoretically, any person was now capable of achieving normalcy…but it offered a very narrow conception of normalcy, and everyone was now measured against it. (p. 6)

As early as the turn of the 19th century, advocates such as Dorothea Dix, a religious reformer (Chapman et al., 2014), recognized the conditions in institutions as actively taking away basic human rights. Still, Chapman et al. (2014) state, "Undifferentiated confinement was now an injustice, but specialized confinement could educate or rehabilitate" (p. 5). During the middle of the 19th century the public began to view crime as a growing and dangerous phenomena in society. Initially, the reformers who called for prisons and institutions, viewed them as platforms of justice, care and moral order and argued for the confinement of people deemed to be in need of more support. Stakeholders during the end of the 19th century were mostly "medical, psychological and educational professionals" who "looked to prisons and medical institutions as a remedy for the resultant chaos" (Chapman et al., 2014, p. 7). Up until the middle of the 20th century many young disabled people and young people who were arrested spent part of their lifespan in a prison, or medical institution, under this mantle of requiring "specialized" care to return to "normal." Chapman et al. (2014) point out that in our current U.S. society there remains distinctions between prisons and medical institutions that demonstrate continued attitudes towards disability as pathologized deficit. As an example, most people involved in the U.S. prison systems are (theoretically) afforded basic human rights, while those in a medical institution are sometimes placed there against their will. This is specifically the case for those with intellectual or emotional disabilities that may rely on family members, support professionals and care workers to communicate. In a similar way to the reformers of the

late 19th and early 20th century, today, at the beginning of the 21st century, many self-advocates are calling for more careful and just treatment for those residing in medical institutions and by extension prisons (Ben-Moshe, 2014).

Before the passing of PL 94-142, the legislation now named IDEIA (Yell, 2010) which mandates all students receive educational services in a manner free from restraint (Taylor, 1988/2004); many families of young people with disabilities were encouraged, typically by medical professionals, to send their child to an institution for their entire life. Often medical professionals also advocated for the family not to remain in contact with their family member who was institutionalized (Sonneborn, 2012; Trent, 1994; Wurzburg & Biklen, 2010). Due to their highly exclusionary nature, institutions, along with prisons, are considered to be the most restrictive spaces (Taylor, 1988/2004). During this period (late 19th to mid 20th century), depending on socio-economic political location, the rejection from public school had different outcomes (Blanchett, 2006; Chapman et al., 2014). Qualifiers such as race, ethnicity and socio-economic status greatly affected where a person with a disability label or a person who was arrested were confined (Chapman et al., 2014). So while many white families were convinced to send their disabled child to a medical institution, families with less economic and social capital were often also rejected from said institutions. Ben-Moshe (2014) makes a similar observation about the intersection of race, socio-economic status and incarceration.

Over time, the families who were able to visit institutions were horrified by what they witnessed. This growing outrage led to investigatory reporting (Primo & Riveria, 1972) and research inquiries (Blatt & Kaplan, 1966) that documented the conditions in medical institutions. The poor treatment of people living there and the practices of the

institution, such as isolation, restraint and seclusion, enforced in the name of care and rehabilitation were alarming, especially when presented visually (via still photograph or video recording). Advocates (mostly compromised of parents) began to organize, often meeting in the homes of the parents whose children were institutionalized (Sonneborn, 2012). The Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens (PARC) was one such group that organized and sought legal action. The initial goal of this group was deinstitutionalization, meaning the closing of medical institutions and the return of their children (and other disabled inhabitants) to their local community (Sonneborn, 2012; Yell, 2010; Ysseldyke & Algozzine, 2006). Initially, PARC did not view public schools as the place for their disabled children. The lawyer, Tom Gilhool, who brought the PARC case (Sonneborn, 2012), determined Brown v. Board (1954) was the most logical legal precedence to ensure the winning of the case. His legal expertise was correct, and the case won. This was the beginning of a series of landmark legal cases that lead to the passing of PL 94-192, which lead to the creation of restricted educational programs within the public school setting.

After 1975 when access to public education was made available through the clauses of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) research demonstrated that excluding young people from their same age peers had a negative impact on their overall social/emotional well being (Allan, 1999; Bogdan & Kugelmass, 1984; Leinhardt & Pallay, 1982). Furthermore, as more and more families attempted to enroll their child(ren) with a disability label at their local public school, some important ideas began to circulate. One was the commonly heard refrain from families and self-advocates that self-contained classrooms (a type of restricted

educational program) were not that different from the institutions their child occupied before the passing of PL 94-142 (Sonneborn, 2012). Furthermore, young people enrolled in these educational programs were consistently viewed from a deficit perspective (Bogdan & Taylor, 1987) and often the curriculum in self-contained classrooms focused on daily living skills and neglected to include the academic subjects being taught to their same age peers in the general education environment (Causton-Theoharis, Theoharis, Orsati & Cosier, 2011; Dunn, 1968).

The traditional special education research base research in restricted educational programs, such as a self-contained classroom, describes these programs as "in need of reform" (Kauffman, 1994); "under researched" (Cipriano, Barnes, Bertoli, Flynn & Rivers, 2016) and as "providing difficult working conditions for teachers" (Bettini, Cumming, Merrill, Brunsting & Liaupsin, 2017). DSE informed research in restricted educational programs uses the classroom as the unit of analysis focusing on: curriculum design (Causton-Theoharis et al, 2011), academic growth (Nisbet, 2004; Taylor, 1988/2004) and instructional strategies (Algozzine, Marsink & Algozzine, 1988). Some DSE informed research uses the student as the unit of analysis, such as Williams & Downing (1998) who conduct research with disabled and non-disabled students about experiences in restricted and inclusive classrooms. The majority of this research tends to focus on specific individual placements (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2011; Algozzine et al., 1988) and experiences of students and teachers therein (Bogden & Kugelmass, 1984; Williams & Downing, 1998) without including the spatial dimension within the lived experiences of young people with disability labels in these placements. Furthermore, Algozzine, Marsink & Algozzine (1988) use their data to state that the general education

environment is not any different, better or worse, for students with disability labels.

Disproportionality. There is a body of research, which notes overrepresentation in the special education and juvenile justice systems, specifically in relation to restricted educational programs. A discussion of the history of restricted educational programs must include a discussion of disproportionality in terms of how spaces labeled restrictive are constructed, as well as, *who* inhabits these spaces. Research shows that Black young people and youth from other non-dominant groups are far more likely to occupy restricted educational programs (Artiles, Kozleski, Trent, Osher & Ortiz, 2010). Research on disproportionality in special education is a well-established body of scholarly work that demonstrates Black and other non-dominant groups, predominantly young men, are overrepresented in special education programs and services (Artiles et al., 2010; Blanchett, Klinger & Harry, 2009; Dunn, 1968; Klinger, Reid & Knight 2006; Voulgarides, Fergus & Thorius, 2017). Annamma (2018) highlights a similar trajectory for young Black women receiving special education program and services who are incarcerated, using map-making techniques to trace how her research participants (young black women) pass through the systems of special education services prior to incarceration.

Research demonstrates that many Black and other non-dominant young people remain enrolled in some version of a restricted educational program for at least a portion of their educational career (Annamma, 2018; Artiles et al., 2010; Blanchett, Klinger & Harry, 2009; Erevelles, 2014). The work of Disability Studies in Education Critical Race theory (DisCrit) scholars to identify the intersections and overlaps of DSE and critical race theory is implicit in the undergirding and construction of this research project and

design (Annamma, Connor & Ferri, 2016). DisCrit scholars argue that racism is always ableist and ableism is always inherently racist (Annamma et al., 2016). This mutual dependency of race and ability is an assumption of how disproportionality is understood in this project. The history in the United States context, one that is fraught with racist tensions and ideologies, rooted in the history of slavery, is coded today in how ability is conceptualized along with race (and other identity categories) in the educational landscape and our larger society (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011).[2]

Some DSE scholars conduct research that shows disproportionality in special education and juvenile justice establishes a well-documented "school to prison" pipeline or nexus. The school to prison nexus uses tools of surveillance to set some students (typically Black youth and those from other non-dominant groups) on a trajectory from restricted educational program to prison (Adams and Erevelles, 2016; Annamma, 2014; Erevelles, 2000, 2010, 2014; Reid & Knight-Manuel, 2006). Erevelles (2000) states,

> In an attempt to control these "disruptive excesses" of unruly bodies, schools have developed elaborate practices that support the rigid organization of classroom space and time, the overriding emphasis on discipline, and the careful monitoring of the curriculum. (p. 33)

Building on this insight, Erevelles (2014) defines the school to prison nexus as, "a multidimensional process that funnels large numbers of minority students from the classroom into the adult prison system" (Aul IV 2012, p. 180 as cited in Erevelles, 2014, p. 82). While the scope of this dissertation does not directly encompass this nexus it is

[2] More recent research (Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier, Mattison, Maczuga, Li & Cook, 2015; Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier & Maczuga, 2017) suggests it is white students with disability labels who are overrepresented. Morgan et al. (2017) argue using one quantitative statistical analysis (NAEP scores) that all the research literature on disproportionality (cited above) must be reconsidered. Collins, Connor, Ferri, Gallagher and Samson (2016) offer a rebuttal to the Morgan et al. (2015) piece by taking up the DSE framework to analyze the claims and argue the deficit orientation which Morgan et al. (2015; 2017) take to understand disability.

designed to move alongside, and sometimes, within the *spaces* that are intimately connected to how this nexus is conceptualized (e.g., restricted educational programs). This is to show how the populations of youth labeled with disabilities and those who have been arrested share similar spatial outcomes. The spatial dimension helps me to highlight how the experience of labeling and the resulting spatialized outcomes are more connected than scholars (Allan, 1999, 2008; Danforth & Rhodes, 1997) address in their research.

In the previous paragraph, I quote Erevelles (2000), stating practices in school are designed to tame, "disruptive excesses of unruly bodies" (p. 33). I would like to extend her quote to say "unruly minds" as well. This is to acknowledge that young people with the label of intellectual disability or emotional disturbance are often perceived as having an impairment in their brain, which includes their ability to rationalize and demonstrate what we have defined as intellect (Carlson, 2009; Kittay, 2019; Smith, 2007). Therefore, the rationale for excluding young people in schools goes beyond the control of their physical bodies to their minds as well.

The brief history of deinstitutionalization I provide demonstrates how beginning in the mid 19th century and for first half of the 20th century various stakeholders worked to address this perceived unruliness through the creation and maintenance of almshouses, medical institutions and prisons (Chapman, Carey, & Ben-Moshe, 2014; Trent, 1994). I share this moment in history to point out that the use of the legal precedent, (Brown V Board) allowed for the development of PL 94-142, which later became IDEIA, but did very little to address commonly held assumptions and deficit notions of disability and difference in U.S. society. Lefebvre (1991) and later Soja (1996) discuss that while spaces are built, they are also maintained through social processes. This becomes one

way to understand that while the legislation changed, the attitude and ideas about people who are labeled disabled or young people involved in the juvenile justice system did not. In fact, young people labeled disabled or court involved are not wholly accepted in society as full and participating members, even today. Theoretically, the logic of maintaining restricted educational programs relates to how these social spaces are constructed.

Attitudes about Ability across Space/Time

The ways our society thinks about and expresses their thinking about disability is heavily researched, theorized and discussed by DS/DSE scholars. Taylor's (1987) early work on stigma and dis-ease extends this idea to demonstrate how the concept of disability as a deficit is deeply ingrained in United States social norms. Understanding how our current public school system has been historically organized suggests the deficit views that people have upheld throughout history about individuals with who are labeled (either through disability classification or court involvement) (Iano, 2004; Skrtic, 2004). This "medical model" of disability is also used as the rationale for developing and maintaining special education programs and services, viewing the spaces where special education services are provided as remedial places for "fixing" children (Slee, 2011).

In the early 20th century as the common schooling movement developed, a group of educational stakeholders with goals of social efficiency established methods for measuring and sorting students as they entered schools (Kliebard, 2004). This labeling and sorting directly links to eugenical projects prevalent at that time (Baynton, 2001;

Davis, 2006; Snyder & Mitchell, 2006). Proponents of eugenics believe there is a set of human traits that are most desirable. Eugenicist's viewed genetic differences such as, hair color, and eye color as traits, which needed to be presented in a specific way (typically blond hair, blue eyes) or be extinguished from the human species. Eugenicists valued strong intellect, physical strength and attractive features as desirable traits (Snyder & Mitchell, 2006). Therefore, eugenicists easily coded disability as a genetic difference that must be eradicated.

Using the "science of genetics" this theory claims that some human lives are more worthwhile and valuable that others (Asch & Wasserman, 2005; Baker, 2002). These assumptions were often made across race/ethnicities which were then presented as truth and in turn used to re-inscribe difference as disability, e.g., the concept that black people possessed inferior intelligence or that women were not as intellectually capable of critical thought as men (Baynton, 2001). Predominant eugenicists in the early twentieth century were white, male, educated scholars from the disciplines of science and psychology (Baker, 2002; Baynton, 2001). This is important historical context to help us understand why certain traits, such as, strong intellect and fortitude for physical fitness were held as more desirable than others traits such as empathy and emotion which demonstrate care (Gilligan, 1993).

Within this historical context, intellectual disability (sometimes referred to as cognitive disability) provides an example of eugenical thinking at its most insidious. Limited intellectual functioning was determined by eugenicists to be an undesirable attribute and people with intellectual disabilities once institutionalized were often sterilized or at times euthanized to prohibit continued propagation of their undesirable

genetic traits (Asch, 1999). This may be partly due to the fact that, many educational researchers (mainly from the discipline of psychology and philosophy) of this time period shared a deeply entrenched deficit view of disability and there was little resistance in the educational community against violent acts such as sterilization and euthanization of people with the intellectual disability label (Carlson, 2009). Even renowned educational philosopher John Dewey (1933, cited in Schubert, 2009) wrote,

> Was it possible for a boy or girl who was normal to grow up without learning the things which he or she needed to learn – because it was evident…that it was not possible for any one *except a congenital idiot* to be born and grow up without learning. (p. 7, emphasis added by author)

This quote appears in an Op-Ed piece written for the New York Times and is reflective of the views of that period. This statement about disability (specifically intellectual disability) from a prominent philosopher occurs in tandem with the growth of the institutionalization movement. I return to Dewey in the next chapter, because his theorizing of experience (1938) is integral to this study. I share this quote to demonstrate the rampant ableism at this time that remains pervasive in our educational philosophy and research literature today.

Therefore, while it would be heartening to state that eugenical thinking is no longer present in our education system or society as a whole, this is not the case. In fact, today populations such as court involved youth and young people with disabilities continue to be understood as primary candidates for removal from the "perfect" human race (Annamma, 2018; Baynton, 2001; Snyder & Mitchell, 2006). As a result, large sections of our educational system remains rooted in the assumption that intelligence is something that can be measured and is an indicator of desirable ("smart") or less desirable (not "smart") traits (Brantlinger, 2006; Broderick & Leonardo, 2011). When

this medicalized pathology is placed alongside the eugenical project of eradicating difference and disability (Canguilhem, 1968/1989), conceptualizations emerge about disability, which are still used today, such as, the medical model, which is directly informed by this history of eugenics and resulting pathologization.

Organization of Schooling Spaces In and Out of Time

Given this history of institutionalization and concurrent eugenical thinking, it is understandable why access along with free appropriate public education, (FAPE) was an integral feature of the PL 94-142 legislation that remains of utmost importance today. It remains an integral organizing feature of how schools structure their spaces. From its passing in 1975 until the early 1990s, schools and more specifically schooling spaces were organized as parallel systems, i.e. general education and special education tracks (Ferguson, 1995; Gallagher, 2004; Iano, 2004; Skrtic, 2004). Drawing from the institutional practice of excluding people who present as being different from the norm (Davis, 2013; Garland-Thomson, 2013), students with disability labels were often enrolled in separate classes primarily comprised of other students with labeled disabilities for the entire school day (Valle & Connor, 2010). In these early iterations of special education in public schools the self-contained classroom was considered to be the appropriate physical space where a child with a disability was placed to receive their education (Ferguson, 1995; Gabel, 2005). Yet, as discussed in chapter I, there remained some exceptions, which included placing students in independent or non-public schools to receive special education programs and services.

A similar trajectory was taking place with how court involved youth were processed and placed after they were arrested (Juvenile Law Center, http://jlc.org, n.d.). At the beginning of the 20th century, young people who interacted with the legal system were often labeled "backward" and laggardly" because they engaged in criminal behavior such as breaking laws (Bissel-Brown, 1990; Lesko, 2012). Today, the term "court-involved" refers to a young person who is dependent on the courts (e.g., foster care system or the juvenile justice system) because of delinquent behavior (www.jlc.org, n.d.). The conception of a child who is caught breaking a law as deviant and therefore, constructed outside the norm is often linked to assumptions about race and social economic status (Annamma, Connor, & Ferri, 2016). Furthermore, the concept that a young person who is court involved as broken and must be fixed is prevalent in the traditional literature of juvenile offenders and detention centers (Klein, 1979). Young people who are arrested often are excluded from the general education environment due to their legal consequence, e.g., being sent to a juvenile detention facility.

Spaces as Having the Capacity to Fix Personal Deficits

Therefore, students who presented as "deviant" were often assigned to a restricted educational program, often with the disability label of emotional disturbance affixed to them (Collins, 2003; Erevelles, 2000). Many of these young people labeled "deviant" or "emotionally disturbed" are involved in court proceedings at some point in their educational career or lifespan (Annamma et al, 2016). The assumption that a specific space, most often a restricted educational program, provides "help" in addressing the perceived "problem," is present in the policies of inclusion (and by implication,

exclusion), which operate in schools (Armstrong, 2003). As Chapman et al. (2014) demonstrate this thinking was present during the late 19th and early 20th century as well. This assumption that spaces themselves offer rehabilitative attributes or properties, the idea that a space rehabilitates a person, either a young person who is disabled, or a young person who has been arrested needs to be further shown and interrogated.

It is well documented in the educational research (particularly, from a DSE perspective) that restricted educational programs are often rooted in the practices of institutionalization (Allan, 2004, 2006; Foucault, 1977; Valle & Connor, 2010). The traditional special education research base is less critical of the institutional practices of some restrictive programs, even if there have been shifts to make special education programs and services more inclusive (Bettini, Cumming, Merrill, Brunsting, & Liaupsin, 2017). Traditional special education research demonstrates how academic and behavioral interventions provide success for students within restricted educational programs (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2011; Boden, Ennis & Jolivette, 2012; Lane, Wehby, Little, & Cooley, 2005; Turnbull, 2017). With this in mind, highlighting some shifts in special education service delivery models with an emphasis on the spatialized outcomes for students demonstrates how these laws and polices are taken up in practice.

Spaces as Fixed

Beginning in the late 1980's and 1990's new initiatives became part of the conversation about special education programming and services. The Regular Education Initiative (REI) was one such reform, often understood as the predecessor for what DSE

informed educational scholars now call inclusion and inclusive education. The REI was grounded in four shifts in thinking, the first being the initial move "from distal to proximal arrangements" (Reynolds, 1989, p. 7) which had occurred with the passing of PL 94-142 (Yell, 2010) as schools were legally required to provide FAPE to all students. The second important move from "selection/rejection to placement decisions" (Reynolds, 1989, p. 7) emphasized a change in how students were classified and sorted. By focusing on placement, educators moved away from the rejection of students based solely on their ability. The solution put forth by REI proponents was the development of a continuum with a range of placement options for children with disability labels to receive their education. The goal of the continuum of services, from the REI perspective, was to stop rejecting students and instead to determine a place where students with disability labels could receive the best education possible (Reynolds, 1989).

Bolstered by the REI, educational stakeholders focused on integration and placement of students with disabilities in general education (considered to be less restrictive) classrooms. Still, the emphasis here was on the social and emotional development of young people with disabilities (Ferguson, 1995). The REI placed an emphasis on providing access for students with disabilities in order to support *their social and emotional development*. Academics were not the primary focus of Reynolds' (1989) continuum; her emphasis remained on social inclusion, though academics were a part of the continuum she developed. Mainstreaming, then, became the term people used to refer to the placement of students with disabilities in general education classes with an emphasis on their social inclusion (Ferguson, 1995; Reynolds, 1989). Mainstreaming aimed to enroll students with disability labels in general education classes in order to

provide access to the general education curriculum (Ferguson, 1995). In practice, it was rarely the expectation of the teacher that the mainstreamed student would complete the academic work at the same “level” as their same age peers.

The linkage between social/emotional or academic needs and specific places where young people can receive supports has not been systematically investigated in DSE scholarship. Reynolds' (1989) arguments against institutions but in favor of specialized classrooms for some disabled students implies a need for bounded spaces, which does nothing to problematize the expectation that a specific space possesses rehabilitative properties. Reynolds argues for the placing of young people on a continuum, due to the fluid nature of student learning and growth. Still, in making her argument she uses binary thinking to argue that for some disabled youth a specific bounded spatialized location is the best method of educational delivery. This works against her original development of the continuum because it implies that some young people with labeled disabilities remain fixed in one social-spatial location for the duration of their academic career (Nisbet, 2004; Taylor, 2001).

At the same time, one result of mainstreaming was that it put general education teachers in closer contact with students with disability labels. As these relationships developed, some students with labeled disabilities excelled at the academic work in the general education classroom space. This disrupted Reynolds’ emphasis on social inclusion and the early goal of the REI to enroll students within general education classes (Reynolds, 1989). At a certain point, mainstreaming came under critique specifically for its emphasis on social/emotional inclusion with a lack of focus on academics (Hocutt, 1996). As the REI gained traction amongst families and peoples with disabilities, the

term “inclusion” came into use more frequently. While inclusion and mainstreaming may look similar in practice, conceptually they are attached to quite different movements.

The inclusion movement focused on the general education environment and how it can be designed to provide *both* academic and social/emotional access for all students, including those with disability labels. A similar rationale underlies both concepts: being segregated or excluded from peers for large portions of the school day is not beneficial to the overall growth and development of the young person (Allan, 1999; Bogdan & Kugelmass, 1984). A shared goal of mainstreaming and inclusion was to provide students access to spaces that are deemed less restrictive (e.g. the general education classroom). Yet, while mainstreaming emphasizes access in the form of social participation and requires little to no modifications to the academics, inclusion emphasizes the participation (social/emotional and academic) of all children in all aspects of the classroom environment (Snow, 2008). As mainstreaming and inclusion movements became more prevalent, DS/DSE scholars conducted more research that increasingly demonstrated the competence of people with disabilities, particularly individuals with low-incidence disabilities (Biklen & Burke, 2006). Therefore, DS/DSE scholars in the late 1990’s and early 2000’s argued that social inclusion was not enough; in fact, it was the bare minimum and public schools were not adhering to their end of the bargain following the 1975 legislation (Beretan, 2006; Bogdan & Taylor, 1987; Ferguson, 1995; Charlton, 2010).

Troubling Spaces as Fixing and Fixed

At this time, the language of mainstreaming and inclusion associated with REI shifted again and moved in favor of the term “inclusive education,” which finds its roots

in DSE field. As stated, DS/DSE scholars argue persistently for a social model of disability that posits the environment as the disabling factor rather than locating the disability within the person, i.e. the medical model, (Gabel, 2006; Valle & Connor, 2010). Since inclusive education is often conceived in terms of a classroom space where all students are to be educated together, with the educator working to develop curricula that has multiple access points for all the learners in the classroom (Hart, Drummond & McIntyre, 2007; Rose, Meyer & Hitchcock, 2005), it is often thought of as special education reform. This, however, is a misnomer and in fact, inclusive education is a new orientation towards education for *all* students: one that can be inclusive of all learners (disabled and non-disabled) from the outset (Slee, 2011). Some would argue that the deficit orientation towards young people with disability labels has shifted as a result of the REI, mainstreaming and inclusion. Research demonstrates that many educational stakeholders and policymakers continue to view disability as deficit and this medical model of disability remains the norm for how special education services and programs are delivered in public schools (Gallagher, 2004; Valle & Connor, 2010). Young people who are court involved face similar assumptions about their legal infraction being representative of their cognitive functioning and are often "sent" to programs that are rooted in more medical understandings of juvenile infractions as reflection a lack of moral fiber (Annamma, 2018; Ben-Moshe, 2014).

Both of these conceptualizations assume that spaces have predetermined static boundaries. The general education classroom is viewed as a fixed place that a young person is included into (Baglieri, et al., 2011; Graham & Slee, 2008) and the restricted educational program is seen as a fixed space with a smaller student to teacher ratio.

Therefore, while the action of moving students from a restricted classroom to a general education classroom (through mainstreaming or inclusion) may appear to disrupt the static notion of space, this only works if we start to imagine any schooling space as always becoming (Armstrong, 2003; Massey, 2005).

Currently, though students may move between spaces, it is often understood as moving from one fixed location (self-contained or juvenile detention facility) to another (general education classroom). This is inevitably reinforced by the built-environment of many schooling spaces, where classrooms are constructed like boxes with four walls, (possibly, but not always) windows and a door (Nespor, 1997). However, informed by third world feminisms and critical spatial theory Naraian (2016b) argues that a "diasporic sensibility" enables educators to decouple "learning need and place" (p. 44). More research that explores how educators uncouple spaces from notions of "fixing" young people remains sparse from the perspective of special education and juvenile justice.

Current trends. When considering spaces, there is a direct line that can be traced from the organization and maintenance of institutions (medical and prisons) to certain practices occurring within special education classrooms and juvenile justice programs today (Bogdan & Taylor 1987; Skrtic, 2004, Taylor, 2004). Gallagher (2004) identifies four major problems as our education systems move towards more inclusive education environments, I situate this project to address her final question: "What is the role of place/space, or where student are/should receive instruction?" (p. 4) As I have outlined, one way this is taken up is through programs such as "inclusion" or "mainstreaming." Naraian (2016b) states,

> 'Inclusion' as typically conceived within mainstream special and general education scholarship leaves the *ability-based* conceptual premises of the general

> education classroom intact and focuses on ensuring that the effects of the student's disability are minimized in a setting primarily designed for students *without* disabilities. (author's emphasis, p. 5)

This underlying conceptualization of inclusion also supports the continued existence of restricted educational programs (Naraian, 2016a). This focus on where to "send" a young person who poses a problem, is taken up by Gabel, Cohen, Kotel & Pearson (2013) who use spatial theory along with critical narrative to argue that labels (e.g., intellectual disability) become synonymous with specific places (p. 76). As young people move between spaces, a label, such as court involvement may also follow a person to a new space (Rapley, 2014).

Still, while such research engages young people with disability labels as participants, their lived experiences recounted in their own words, has not received explicit foregrounding (Lehman & Lava, 2013). Adult disabled scholars who take up a phenomenological approach describe their own experience with shifting and fluid identities (French, 1999; Michalko, 2001; Brittain & Peers, 2008). Still, in these first person narratives, the discussion of fluid identity is made more as a passing observation and less as a specific and concentrated analysis on the role of space as supporting or prohibiting this fluidity.

Given this discussion of research from both the special education and DSE informed scholarship base, the significance of why these spaces continue to exist has important implications. Armstrong (2003) suggests that one reason people with disabilities and their families continue to advocate for placement in a restricted educational programs is connected to the "social estrangement" that some young people with disabilities experience in "inclusive settings" (p. 19). DSE informed research on

inclusive education makes a similar observation when referring to “inclusion island” (Horne & Timmons, 2009), which is the practice of placing all students with disability labels in the same part of the classroom. Gabel (2005) states,

> Educational disablement often begins in general education settings, as when reasonable accommodations are refused, school communities are exclusive, parents believe their child with an impairment will not receive equitable treatment in general education, or the necessary resources for full inclusion are not provided”. (p. 17)

Graham & Slee (2008) provide some theoretical understanding for this research in discussing the “illusory interiority” meaning that originally inclusive education was a radical way for educating all people. Yet, due to the inherent difficulties within the general education space many students who are included find this supposedly less restrictive space, adds to their disablement (Gabel, 2002). Therefore, when young people are included into environments deemed less restrictive, educational researchers must continue to critically ask, “included into what?” (Graham & Slee, 2008).

Some DSE-informed empirical research investigates the movement of students between educational spaces from most to least restrictive spaces (Allan, 2004; Bogdan & Kuglesmass, 1984; Ferguson, 1995; Kliewer, Fitzgerald, Meyer-Mork, Hartman, English-Sand & Raschke, 2004; Naraian, 2010). Another area of DSE informed research takes up critical spatial racial theory (Morrison, Annamma & Jackson, 2017), which is a blending of critical race theory and critical spatial theory and emphasizes the tools of critical spatial theory (e.g., GIS mapping) as a way for collecting research that allows for the acknowledgement of the spatialized dimension of human experience. For the most part this research uses critical spatial theory to understand policy narratives (Waitoller & Radinksy, 2017), and mapping techniques (Annamma, 2018) to again draw attention to

policies that may support "inclusion" in their language but enact exclusion. A review of the research demonstrates that by attending to the spatial dimension researchers are able to understand large trends of how the policies of inclusion and exclusion operate (Armstrong, 1999, 2003; Waitoller & Radinsky, 2017) while also providing a way to understand the spatialized experiences of young people who experience these policies on a daily basis.

This research project assumes the orientation that large systemic problems require small incremental changes, which may take several decades of restorative research and work. Gabel's (2002) states,

> It becomes even more difficult to construct a pedagogical view of freedom in a classroom community wherein students with significantly diverse abilities are full and active participants. It is at least as difficult to construct a pedagogy that includes students with significant physical differences who may require total physical care, who may drool, whose limbs may jerk uncontrollably, or who may wear diapers. These people, it would seem, are too different to be incorporated into the critical pedagogical discourse unless that discourse places them in classrooms with other people. (p. 191)

Inclusive education may be more about providing an array of supports and options without diminishing any of the spaces where one may receive their education (restricted or otherwise) (Gabel, 2002; Naraian, 2017). One way of conceptualizing inclusive education is as a stance that is oriented towards meeting the needs of a young person in the moment (Biklen & Burke, 2006; Danforth & Smith, 2004; Kittay, 1999; Naraian, 2017). From this understanding of perceived need an educator is capable of developing a space that values the diversity of ability that exists for all children (Danforth & Naraian, 2015).

Using the DSE framework alongside critical spatial theory provides a rich, interdisciplinary and diverse way of interpreting and understanding the theoretical

landscape. More DSE informed research in restricted educational programs that uses critical spatial theory is needed. Scholars using a DSE framework, and critical spatial theory together use these theories to highlight large trends of exclusion and inclusion (Armstrong, 2003; Waitoller & Radinsky, 2017) instead of attending to the lived experiences of people in spaces to understand how people access them and gain equality in sustainable, equitable and inclusive ways which is often a complex, messy process. Building on research, which analyzes and seeks to understand large trends (Annamma, Morrison & Jackson, 2017; Armstrong, 2003; Waitoller & Radinsky, 2017) this dissertation research project is oriented to highlight the specific stories of individuals who are impacted by trends and policies (Farmer-Hinton, Lewis, Pallon & Rivers, 2013).

The DSE framework and the lens of critical spatial theory provide opportunities to attend to the three-dimensional space (Clandinin, 2013) inhabited by participants, and to uncover how people live narratively in restricted educational programs, and its implications for how society conceptualizes education for all students. Bone (2017) citing Erevelles (2014) states,

> One of the key questions often asked in disability studies is: 'Am I speaking with disabled people or about them' (Erevelles 2014)? This question, acting in response to disability rights slogans like 'Nothing About Me Without Me,' asks scholars, activists, and family members alike if they are speaking in place of or providing space for disabled voices. (p. 14)

As I elaborate in the next chapter, I used ethnographic narrative inquiry as a method to come alongside my participants in order to speak with, and not for them. Of course, in practice, this was difficult work. By theorizing from the words (communications, stories, ideas,) of people within restricted educational programs, I construct an argument that spaces are dynamic and agentive in how ideas change over time.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

> "Austerlitz…had been thinking of our encounters in Belgium, so long ago now, and telling himself he must find someone to whom he could relate his own story, a story…for which he needed the kind of listener I had once been in Antwerp" (Sebald, 2001, p. 43).

> Stories, like bodies and in symbiosis with bodies, are people's dignity and their calamity" (Frank, 2010, p. 146)

As discussed in Chapter II, the practices of institutionalization are dehumanizing. My anecdotal experiences as a special education classroom teacher and workshop facilitator at an alternative-to-detention program both confirm and complicate this theme reflected in the literature. As I show, spaces in school are often considered to be fixed, e.g., classrooms are viewed as containers for people and materials (Nespor, 1997). Though perhaps more evident in schools, this notion of the fixedness of space exists outside of schools as well. As I designed my research puzzle I wondered: what does an attention to the stories in restricted educational programs help me to do? How do I orient myself to study the lived experiences of the people within these spaces? In this chapter, I provide some insight into how I attempted to answer these questions through a discussion of my overall research design, including the philosophical orientation of this project, which informs my methodology. From this standpoint, I then discuss how I collected and analyzed all project data.

During the mid-twentieth century, as institutions were partially disbanded and legislation was created to establish FAPE for all young people, special education

classrooms became one of the spaces wherein dehumanizing practices of institutions were the most apparent (Gaffney, 2014; Trent, 1994; Valle & Connor, 2010). As previously stated, the purpose of this ethnographic narrative inquiry was to identify and understand what happens in spaces that are labeled restricted. If some groups of people are labeled in ways that have specific spatialized outcomes (Armstrong, 2003, 2012; Goodley, 2010; Naraian, 2016b), then what occurs within those spaces? By starting from a specific social-spatial location, this inquiry was designed to understand how the day-to-day experiences within two separate restricted educational programs provide another perspective or way of thinking about a large-scale reform movement, such as inclusive education.

Overall Research Design

The continued emphasis on quantitative and evidence-based research at the Federal level in the United States (Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach & Richardson, 2005) and more specifically within the fields of special education and juvenile justice greatly influences what is accepted as evidence. Kozleski (2017) states,

> Special education, as a specialization within the field of education, has been deeply influenced by the increasing emphasis on scientifically established knowledge, practice and policy. By extension, how the field warrants knowledge has been sharply impacted. (p. 19)

The emphasis on evidence-based practice (EBP) as a means to study an intervention or on selecting "scientifically based interventions" (p. 20) traditionally shapes how quantitatively oriented research is conducted and studied within the traditional special education research base. DS/DSE aligned research views the emphasis on EBPs as a

continuation of medical model thinking about ability. This is because EBPs, which emphasize intervention (either academic or behavioral), continue to locate the "problem" within the individual student. As I discussed in Chapter II, taking an alternative approach, DS/DSE scholars use the social model to conceptualize disability as a barrier within the physical environment.

Therefore, the decision to design a qualitative study, that was also an ethnographic narrative inquiry, was intended to add to the knowledge base in the field(s) of DSE, special education and juvenile justice. I argue, following Kozleski (2017) that EBPs are *one* way of understanding what is happening in the field(s) of special education and juvenile justice. The larger questions, such as, "how knowledge is constructed?" and "whose knowledge it is?" remains integral to the ethos of this project. Kozleski (2017) states, "Selecting methods for understanding a practice that (a) account for context and (b) begin with the people who are affected by the change, are critical for sustained improvements" (p. 21). Although this project is informed by DSE tenets that actively work to interrogate assumptions about ability and disability, it was also envisioned as an example of qualitative research that "strengthen[s] the tapestry of evidence on which practice must be grounded" (Kozleski, 2017).

Furthermore, the research design takes up the lens of critical spatial theory as a means to methodologically challenge the commonly held assumptions of educational research that data must produce evidence and should be valid and reliable from a scientific standpoint (Harding, 2006; Patel, 2005). This research project does take validity, reliability and trustworthiness into account but draws on the theories of phenomenology and experience (Dewey, 1938) to privilege a research design that

remains flexible and open to the lived realities of research participants as the main source of meaning making in this project.

Philosophical Orientations

> Thy sickness, they say, and thy puny habit, require that thou do this or avoid that, but know that thy life is a flitting state, a tent for a night, and do thou, sick or well, finish that stint. Thou art sick, but shalt not be worse, and the universe, which holds thee dear, shall be better. (Emerson, 1844, p. 298)

Though not an educational philosopher, in the above quote, Emerson (1844) attends to the value of every human life, suggesting that by existing a person brings meaning to the world. When Emerson suggests "life is but a flitting state, a tent for the night" I am reminded of Garland-Thomson's (1997) quote, "The fact that we will all become disabled if we live long enough is a reality many people who consider themselves able-bodied are reluctant to admit" (p. 14). Emerson's encouragement, "though, sick or well, finish that stint" suggests an orientation towards understanding human life and human experience that moves beyond the argument that intellect or rationality are markers of a meaningful and good life. This way of thinking suggests starting from the orientation that existing as a human being provides a specific individual experience that *must* be valued, similar to Biklen & Burke's (2006) development of "presuming competence" as an orientation for valuing all human beings regardless of assumptions based on labels. In this way, the philosophical orientation of my study starts

with the Emerson quote above and then moves to Heidegger's[1] concept of *Daesin*[2], the notion of being human. Donnelly (1999) states,

> Heidegger' s primary concern was with the systematic study of being, that is, with ontology. He found himself in conflict with much of the Western tradition in philosophy, and particularly its emphasis on the study of knowing, that is, epistemology. His approach can be summed up sloganistically as offering to reverse the thrust of Descartes' cogito ergo sum. (p. 933)

Heidegger, in flipping Descartes (1637) to state, "I am, therefore I think" is more in line with presuming competence (Biklen & Burke, 2006) as well. Still, within the fields of DS/DSE, researchers who take up this reading of Heidegger are challenged to question their approach (Abrams, 2016). In the spirit of balanced inquiry, and the need to question my own assumptions as a researcher throughout this project, I followed Abram's (2016) cautioning that simply presenting Heidegger as an opposition to Cartesian dualism (p. 119) does nothing to move the argument of DS/DSE orientated scholars away from binary thinking. As Abrams (2016) suggests, reversing this conception to say body/mind still preserves the binary (p. 121). I argue, and demonstrate through this research project, that it is the lived experiences of all people, which fundamentally challenges the body/mind binary. Only through attention to lived experiences do educational researchers begin to understand how the human impulse to organize and categorize has less to do with the lived experiences of people which are often messy, complicated and difficult to label as "this" or "that." As I began with in Chapter I, our lived experiences frame our

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[1] It should be noted, that while I use Heidegger's conceptualizations to inform my research design, similar to my point about Dewey's use of eugenical language (see e.g., n. 8 below), Heidegger is a former member of the Nazi party, though he removed his membership in 1934. Throughout his life, Heidegger never discussed his role as a potential nazi-sympathizer or (and it is documented) that he purposefully engaged in anti-Semitic acts towards his University colleagues. I include this to say that while we must read a text on it's own terms, I am aware of this complication in using Heidegger's theories, which I still believe helpfully elucidate the research design for this project.

[2] The concept of being human that is unique to the human experience (Heidegger, 1962)

understandings (thinking back to Jason and Bryan) and it is ultimately, our lived experience which force us to reconsider binary thinking, including how quickly humans seek to organize the messiness of our daily life into categories.

From the outset, this dissertation explored ways to facilitate attending to people's lived experiences from within restricted educational programs that (potentially) disrupted binary thinking. As a result, the overall research design was "unstructured…to allow…for the focus on the *particular* phenomena studied" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 64). My goal was to understand phenomena, which occur in restricted educational programs, but as an ethnographic narrative inquirer, I aimed to draw the phenomena from the lived experiences of my research participants. This meant it was not until I entered the three-dimensional research space that the phenomena I planned to study were fully elaborated (Clandinin, 2013; Kim, 2016).

Pointing towards educational justice. There has been a persistent felt need across history to measure people, especially their intellect, as a means to normalize (Carlson, 2009). In schools this is done in part as a way to standardize curriculum delivery and content (Kliebard, 2004). Simplican (2015) picks up this idea in her discussion of democracy, rationality and intellectual disability. Simplican (2015) states, "Democracy entails that we imagine that the most political duties are cognitive tasks, such as reasoning, reflection, judgment and deliberation" (p. 3). Nussbaum (2006), by developing a list of capabilities, troubles this emphasis on the cognitive as a means of determining justice. Sen (2009) makes a similar critique and develops a list of capabilities to establish more "just" institutions.

Arguing that capabilities were a more generative standpoint than rationality from which to consider a person's essence or being, Walker & Unterhalter (2007) elaborate on Sen's (2009) definition of capabilities when applied to the field of education. They state, "[a] central tenet is that in evaluations one must look at each person not as a means to economic growth and social stability but as an end" (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007, p. 19). Still, Kittay (2001) critiques the capabilities approach (Nussbaum, 2006; Sen, 2009; Walker & Unterhalter, 2007) because while it attempts to encompass the rich variety of human existence, Kittay (2001) points out, rarely does it include the voices or lived experiences of people labeled with disabilities. Later, Kittay (2005) argues that a non-disabled DS/DSE informed philosopher must assume a posture of disability humility. Kittay's point is that when writing about disabled people, especially when theorizing and researching, one must assume a posture of humility and orient oneself towards accepting that much of what is "known" about disability is based on assumptions, which are often rooted in eugenical thinking.

My aim was to orient myself, as the person in the role of researcher, towards locating justice and moral theory that moves beyond Kant's (1785/1998) categorical imperative[3] (Kittay, 2001; Tronto, 1995). Simplican (2015) commenting on Nussbaum (2006) and Sen (2009) questions, "why is this set of capabilities or rationality necessary?" (p. 11). In accordance with Simplican, some DS/DSE informed scholars make the connection between the primary emphasis on reason during the Enlightenment and the continued resistance to develop more fluid definitions of rationality and intellect (Ferguson and Nussbaum, 2012). Following Goodley (2001), I argue that the potential for

[3] Simply put, Kant's moral theory is centered on how humans evaluate the motives for their actions. For a more in depth discussion see, Allison, H.E. (2013; 1986).

more fluid understandings of ability should come from the lived experiences of people who are labeled and/or inhabit restricted educational programs.

Using the lens of critical spatial theory allowed me to engage with ideas of educational justice in terms of how it was lived and experienced by people in restricted educational programs. As I have discussed in Chapter II, Soja's (2010) theory of critical spatial (in) justice sheds light on how Sen's (2009) critique of "just" institutions plays out in built environments, such as a large city, in which pockets of excessive riches and abject poverty exist within a few blocks of one another (Soja, 2010). Harvey (2012) takes this up in his discussion of the spatial capital and how economic goods flow more freely and readily across some spaces and not others. Vasudevan, Rodriguez-Kerr and Salazar-Gallardo (2016) state,

> While 'justice' is conceptually challenging and complex to define, the experience of justice or injustice is simple, local, and ordinary. People's lives and everyday actions and interactions are the sites—that is, the "when" and not "where" of justice. (p. 265)

In this spirit, and following Simplican's (2015) question about the need for the emphasis to be on capabilities, I folded into my research design ways to think about and attend to justice as an everyday experience.

More recently a few educational researchers make a similar suggestion with regard to the orientation of bearing witness (Fine, 2006; Hansen, 2017). Referring to the posture that a researcher assumes, one of openness to the world, which involves philosophical humility (Kittay, 2005), and an acknowledgement that a researcher does not know everything about another persons' lived experience. Pillow (2019) pushes this further when she writes about "epistemic witnessing" noting the potentially oppressive acts of theorizing about (and not with) people (specifically people from non-dominant

groups). Bearing witness, or maintaining a posture towards openness and epistemic witnessing again allows for the researcher to inquire with research participants lived experience as the starting point for meaning making. Engaging with Pillow (2019), Hansen (2017), Fine (2006) and Kittay (2005) together via this dissertation project points towards a potentially more ethical and just way to engage in educational research.

Finally, Tronto (1995) locates this responsibility of moral justice within an ethic of care. Describing an ethic of care as "a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair our 'world' so that we can live as well as possible" (Tronto & Fisher, 1990, p. 40), Tronto (1995) insists we locate our understandings of care in "lived experiences of people in all of their variety" (p. 142). As I established this research design I used these conceptualizations, from both phenomenological and interpretive paradigms, to work towards an understanding of educational justice. These concepts were part of what guided how I, as the researcher, prepared to enter the three-dimensional research space (Clandinin, 2013).

Narrative Inquiry: "The Art of Unknowing"

Narrative inquiry, as a method, offers flexibility in terms of design and alignment with various philosophical fields (Kim, 2016). As I have shown in Chapters I and II, the research conducted within restricted educational programs often addresses the instructional practices or the procedural elements, which construct the space, but rarely studies the spaces themselves. The lens of critical spatiality, however, by allowing me to attend to the social relations produced both within and outside of a space, provided me with a way of understanding how spaces operate for those who inhabit them. I recorded,

witnessed, collected and analyzed the social interactions within and outside of restricted educational programs through the use of ethnographic, narrative and spatial methods.

Kim (2016) citing Leavy (2009) describes "narrative as a phenomenon to understand multidimensional meanings of society, culture, human actions and life. It attempts to access participants' life experiences and engage in a process of storytelling" (p. 6). Bruner's (1986) discussion of paradigmatic and narrative knowing argues that narrative structures and formations are so deeply entrenched that they inform how we come to understand, interpret, and analyze our own experiences. Clandinin & Rosiek, (2007) state, "Narrative inquirers study the individual's experience in the world, an experience that is storied both in the living and telling and that can be studied by listening, observing, living alongside one another, and writing, and interpreting texts" (pp. 42-43). Connelly & Clandinin (2006) state that they draw from Dewey's theory of experience in terms of how they define experience. Dewey's theory posits that through experiences, which are often structured narratively (Bruner, 2004), people come to make sense of their world. Dewey[4] (1909) states, "if one wishes to describe anything truly, his task is to tell what it is experienced as" (p.189). Experience, then, includes both active and passive elements. It is both the "something that happens" and the "something that we do with what has happened" (Kim, 2016, p. 70). Mohanty (2000) states, "There are different ways of making sense of an experience, and the way we make sense of it can in fact create a new experience" (p. 34). This is also Dewey's point that it is through active

[4]I draw my reader's attention to the point I've made about Dewey in previous chapters that if nothing else he employed ableist language in his writing which calls into question how he conceived and regarded people with disability labels. Similar to my note with Heidegger, I state this because I think it is important to acknowledge Dewey's ableist orientation, since I will be using his insights into narrative, as part of this inquiry.

and passive interaction with experience *over time* that our worldview grows and develops.

Temporality, sociality and spatiality. In the field of narrative inquiry, this growth and development is accomplished by attending to the dimensions of "temporality, sociality and place" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 12) that co-exist in a given research puzzle. "Temporality" suggests that ideas take shape over time and shape how an experience is lived or told (Clandinin, 2013, p. 39). "Sociality", or "the conditions under which people's experiences and events are unfolding" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 40), suggests that experiences often happen in communication, either with another person, or in communication with self or material object. It is important to note the relational aspect of this method and underscore that the researcher and research participants always bump up against each other's sociality in the three-dimensional research space. Finally, "place" is attended to by the narrative inquirer acknowledging that temporality and sociality occur somewhere. This awareness, on the part of the researcher, that all stories occur in a space emphasizes the point: context matters! Therefore, narrative inquiry was well suited to a research design that was already oriented to attend to spatiality.

To summarize, the aim of narrative inquiry is to better understand human experience through simultaneously occurring stories, which are in turn embedded within the socio-political and cultural landscape of a specific location. Clandinin (2013) states, "Experience, is, in this view, a storied phenomenon" (p. 33) and to her point, Clandinin (2013) highlights four key terms, "living, telling, retelling, reliving and restorying" which demonstrate how experience is addressed in the method of narrative inquiry. Clandinin (2013) states, "Narrative inquiry is an approach to the study of human lives conceived as

a way of honoring lived experiences as a source of important knowledge and understanding" (p. 17). In fact, this quality of narrative inquiry, that it privileges the epistemic value of the experiences of research participants was integral to the design of this study. Initially, my entering into the field and developing relationships with research participants was framed by my conceptualization of educational justice and how I oriented myself to conduct this research.

Bruner's (1986) narrative knowing, the idea that people live their stories and in turn tell their stories, (Clandinin, 2013, p. 34) is another important aspect of narrative inquiry as a method for "coming alongside" research participants in order to retell and relive stories (Clandinin, 2013). Frank (2010) states,

> Stories and material objects work together, each informing the other—but most of all because the story shows how deeply people become caught up in one version of a story, even though the same events could be told to a very different effect. (p. 7)

Stories are relational, and close attention to the work of relational research lies at the heart of this inquiry. Therefore, the concept of "coming alongside" (Clandinin, 2013), which I also refer to as "withness" is something I emphasized as a means to prepare myself, as the researcher, to collect and analyze the project data. Furthermore, I acknowledged that "withness" occurred (at times) with people *and* with material objects within spaces.

Finally, though narrative inquiry relies heavily on the spoken and written word, using the DSE framework allowed me to highlight alternative forms of communication, and gather data from participants who communicated in alternative ways, such as the use

of an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)[5] device. My aim was to honor a variety of communication modes which people choose to make meaning. This meant relying solely on a spoken (oral) interview was problematic. To address this, I used various multimodal approaches throughout my data collection, such as digital youth artifact creation which included digital colleges, website portfolios, and still photography of empty spaces. I also drew sketches in my field journal of the physical movements of bodies (and sometimes materials) during the observation period.

I view multimodality as a stance (Jewitt, Bezemer, & O'Halloran, 2016) that allowed me to address the conditions, which must be established within the research design for the researcher to extend an invitation to the participants to engage in the inquiry. Multimodality is often defined as the "multiple means of meaning making" (Jewitt et al., 2016, p. 2) people employ in order to communicate. Jewitt et al., (2016) state, "Multimodality marks a departure from the traditional opposition of 'verbal' and 'non-verbal' communication, which presumes that the verbal is primary and that all other means of making meaning can be dealt with by one and the same term" (p. 3). Taking a multimodal approach to data collection and analysis helped me to address the need for universal access to the research project for all participants.

Finally, because I considered the idea, that spaces are themselves stories (Craig, personal communication, April 12, 2018) I employed practices of visual analysis in my data analysis (Pink, 2015; Rose, 2012). This involved taking still images of the spaces without people present. I attended to how the visual images were composed (Rose, 2012,

[5] AAC refers to a variety of communication methods used in lieu of spoken (oral) language or writing for those with impairments related to speech production and comprehension in either oral or written language.

p. 15) to further argue that images are also stories, and were included in the data collection and analysis for this project.

Description of spaces and people

This ethnographic narrative inquiry used purposeful sampling (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) and was conducted in two separate restricted educational programs. This was a multisite study partially because it is "oriented towards developing theory" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 70). I relied on ethnographic and narrative methods as a way for me to use the "constant comparative method" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007 citing Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1994) to analyze data throughout the collection period. Thus first, I gained an understanding of the phenomena over a period of two months (at each site) through my initial fieldwork, which mainly relied on participant observation. For the remaining four months at each site, I continued the ethnographic practices of participant observation but I also began conducting semi-structured interviews (with youth participants) and unstructured, open-ended interviews (with adult participants) (Kim, 2016, p. 164). This refined my understanding of the phenomena, which I refer to as "data refrains" through my analysis.

Given the privileging of the spatial dimension in this research, it was necessary to consider two different restricted educational settings to address the ways stories are both personal and situational (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). To this end, though I used the "constant comparative method" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) to analyze my data, this was not a comparative study. Bogdan & Biklen (2007) state, "looking at similarities and

difference in perspectives and situations [helps multisite researchers to] develop an analysis and build theory" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 73). The limited amount of research participants at one site limited my ability to understand an emerging theory, making two separate research sites necessary for this study. In an attempt to understand "how meanings travel" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 76) and given the spatial dimension of this work, conducting data collection in two separate sites helped me to provide a richer analysis, which included many perspectives of participants from two different restricted educational programs.

My aim was not to test a theory developed in one site, on the second site, but instead to deeply engage with two different restricted educational programs, in order to address the research questions developed for the project. Designing research conducted in two separate restricted educational programs both inside and outside of school was intentional to better understand the social processes in each space and the resulting phenomena produced. The in-school site was considered the primary data collection site, and the afterschool program, was the secondary site. Neither site was considered to be a test site or control site.

Part of my rationale for two separate restricted educational spaces came from the work of Bogdan, Brown & Foster (1982) who conducted research on a neonatal hospital unit about doctor/nurse and family communication. Bodgan et al. (1982) engaged in research on communication in a site outside of the traditional educational research landscape. As a result Bogdan et al. (1982) were able to use their data to interpret theories to understand more clearly the patterns (such as assessing parents) that occur on the neonatal ward as hospital staff and families communicate, during an already tense period

of time (e.g., determining the viability of their newborn, often premature, child). These patterns helped Bogdan et al. (1982) understand in a much deeper and richer way the kinds of patterns that emerge in schools when special education teachers/staff communicate with families.

The rationale of Bogdan et al. (1982) provided for using two different sites was consistent with my own lived experience in occupying both research sites. Deeply engaging with the day-to-day practices within the afterschool site enlivened my own thinking about the day-to-day practices at the in-school site. From this standpoint (Harding, 2006), engaging in data collection and analysis from two separate sites, without comparing them, was necessary. Two specific and different restricted educational programs were required in order to make better sense of how "interlocking systems" (Chapman, Carey & Ben-Moshe, 2014, p. 15) work in concert to legitimize institutional practices. In this sense, collecting and analyzing data from two separate sites was a way to construct a thick and richer description (Geertz, 1973) of the phenomena in each respective space that pointed towards a fuller explication by uplifting the stories of the young people and adults at each site.

Spaces (context)

The first research site (Site 1) was an independent school for youth with low-incidence disabilities, called the Saturn School[6]. The Saturn School was established in

[6] I provide a more in-depth historical description of the Saturn School in Chapter V.

1968 by a local disabled advocate who noted that young people, especially those with low-incidence disabilities, such as physical impairment, deafness, blindness, multiple disabilities and other health impairments were systematically excluded from local schools[7]. Today, the Saturn School currently enrolls 185 youth between the ages of 4-18. This dissertation study focused on the high school portion of the Saturn School, which included youth aged 14-18 years old.

Located about 30 miles from Center City, a large Northeastern city which maintains a large public school district, The Saturn School often enrolls young people who have been denied special education programs and services in the Center City public school district and surrounding suburban school districts. This denial of service is typically due to barriers related to physical accessibility and/or required health supports, related to impairment. Most of youth (and their families) attending the Saturn School do not pay to attend the school. Instead the local public school district subsidizes their enrollment because the district is unable to provide academic and related service supports.

The second research site (Site 2) was an afterschool alternative to detention program (ATDP), named Voices[8]. Voices enrolls 11-16 year olds and is nested within a larger parent organization which provides alternatives to incarceration for people in Center City involved in juvenile or adult justice. There are three physical Voices locations, and two participated in this dissertation study. Data was primarily collected at the Center City Voices, and some data was collected at the Voices North location. Both

[7] Due to a provision in the Education Law (§4201) the Saturn school is designated by the state to receive funding in order to provide services to youth with low incidence disabilities.

[8] I provide a more in-depth historical description of the Voices program in Chapter IV.

physical spaces have their own dedicated classrooms during the hours Voices is in session, (4-7 p.m.), but are typically shared with other programs run at different times of day. The Center City Voices location typically enrolls youth who are awaiting their court case to be decided. This means it is a temporary program where a young person is mandated to attend by a family court judge. The Voices program is part of a larger parent organization, Journeys, which is a non-profit community based organization, which provides alternatives to incarceration for adults and detention for youth.

People (research participants)

After receiving Teachers College IRB approval (TC IRB 18-380) a total of 10 youth and 8 adults were recruited and consented to participate in this dissertation research study across both Site 1 and Site 2. All youth participants completed assent forms and their families/guardians completed parental permission forms. All adult participants completed informed consent forms.

Site 1: Saturn school youth. The youth participants for Site 1 were all enrolled in 12th grade at the Saturn high school during the 2018-2019 school year. The 12th grade consisted of 18 students of which 8 youth assented to participate in the study. Parental permission forms were provided to all 18 youth enrolled in the 12th grade, 10 youth returned forms, but 2 youth's families elected not to participate in the study. All 8 youth who returned affirmative parental permission forms also completed assent forms with myself and another adult at the school serving as witness.

The 8 youth participants were all between the ages of 17-18. About half the youth

participants had been enrolled at the Saturn School since kindergarten/early elementary school. The remaining 4 participants enrolled later during the middle school years (ages 11-14) or at the start of 9th grade. Since Saturn School only enrolls youth with low-incidence disabilities each youth self-identified as a person with a disability. All 8 participants used mobility aids (such as a wheelchair or walker) to support their movement in a given environment.

Site 1: Saturn school adults. The adult participants in the study from Site 1 included three content area teachers and two teaching assistants who also worked with the 12th graders. Mr. Cross, one of the 12th grade English teachers had been working at the Saturn School for 10 years and taught English to youth in 9th – 12th grade. Mr. Harpin, the Social Studies teacher, had been working at the Saturn School for 11 years and also taught 9th-12th grade. Ms. Rogers, the Media Arts teacher, was completing her 2nd year the Saturn School as lead teacher, she had previously worked at the school as a Teaching Assistant. Ms. Rogers, taught middle school and high school youth at Saturn. Ms. Eileen and Ms. Lacey, two teaching assistants who worked with Ms. Rogers in the Literacy Arts classroom also agreed to participate in the study.

Site 2: Voices youth. Young people mandated to attend the Voices program have been arrested, typically for minor infractions, such as hopping a turnstyle in the subway or not having government ID while moving around the city. Often, the young people attending Voices are arrested for infractions that in other spaces (e.g., suburban areas) might be dealt with in a different fashion (e.g., a warning instead of an arrest) (Rodriguez-Kerr, 2014). Rodriguez-Kerr (2014) writes about the transient nature of youth

mandated to attend the Voices program. This was true in my experience as well. Two youth attending the Voices program while I conducted my research project assented to participate in the study.[9]

Site 2: Voices adults. The adult participants included: Alexis, the educational director. Melissa, the Center City case manager and Kyle, the team leader and social worker at both the Voices North and Center City location. Due to changes in the budgetary structures both Melissa and Kyle ran some workshop programming during the data collection period. In the following chapters (IV and V) I provide much richer descriptions of the all research participants who participated in this study.

Instruments and procedures

Data collection primarily consisted of qualitative ethnographic methods (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011a) such as participant observation, open ended and semi-structured interviewing, document analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Kim, 2016) and visual analysis (Rose, 2012). Throughout collection period the DSE framework and a lens of critical spatial theory informed my data collection. In the first phases of data collection, I focused on relationship and rapport building in order to establish my role in the three-dimensional research space, which took precedence as I

[9] In order to participate in the study, youth at Voices completed an assent form and their families completed a parental permissions form. Due to the transient nature of youth attending the Voices program, it was quite difficult to receive parental permission, which also limited the amount of youth participants at this site.

attend to the various ways my participants' were living their stories (Clandinin, 2013; Kim, 2016).

Data Collection

As I have shown in the previous chapters, historically, there is the assumption that some spaces "fix" people. Engaging the social model of disability allowed me to question the notion of rehabilitation as a way for fixing someone who is labeled, which as I have shown, is still quite common (Valle & Connor, 2010; Waitoller & Kozeleski, 2013). Therefore, though my goal during data collection was to collect stories from my participants. I strived not to "other" my participants during this process (Patel, 2005). Along with the concept of "bearing witness" (Fine, 2006; Hansen, 2017; Pillow, 2019) I drew from DSE scholars who have conducted ethnographies (Armstrong, 2003; Goodley, 2001; Kliewer, Fitzgerald, Meyer-Mork, Hartman, English-Sand, & Raschke, 2004) as well as educational scholars who conduct ethnographies, which employed spatial theory in educational spaces (Buendia & Ares, 2006; Kim, 2010; Nespor, 1995) to develop my methodology. Yet, I approached this with great care and caution due to the ongoing and historical marginalization of young people who are labeled and the adults who work in support of this population of young people.

Throughout data collection I complicated a reliance on the strong social model. During my data collection this was important for two specific methodological reasons. One, it allowed me, as the researcher, to build a relationships with my research participants that left room for differing ideologies. Since the medical model of understanding special education and juvenile justice practices are still prevalent in the

three-dimensional research spaces I entered, there were often moments when my research participants (more often the adults) held varying degrees of deficit ideology or terminology (specifically when talking about youth). As the main researcher in this project, my first goal was to meet my participants where they were (Anzaldua, 2003; Naraian, 2017) and maintain an orientation in the research relationship that established a rapport where participants expressed their views and ideas about their lived experiences in restricted educational programs. Anzaldua (2003) states,

> When you include the complexity of feeling two or more ways about a person/issue, when you empathize and try to see her circumstances from her position, you accommodate the other's perspective, achieving un concimiento[10] that allows you to shift toward a less defensive, more inclusive identity. When you relate to others, not as parts, problems or useful commodities, but from a connectionist view compassion triggers transformation. (p. 569)

Put another way, it was not my role as the researcher to judge the views of the participants or to make assumptions, but instead to provide analysis, alongside participants to better understand their lived experiences. Reflexivity (Luttrell, 2010) was addressed through the use of memo-ing and journaling during the data collection period.

Secondly, not all disabilities or lived experiences of disabled people are socially constructed. I used Sieber's (2008) theory of complex embodiment to build on Abrams (2016) critique of the social model and to suggest that social and medical models of disability remain located within binary logic. Goodley (2001) provides an in-depth discussion of disability models and how they inform research and force us to re-conceptualize binary thinking (p. 216). I purposefully used these models as guides during my data collection, in order to leave room for my participants to share their views without

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[10] Here Anzualdua is referring to knowledge but also, meaning a knowledge of self.

creating a determination or judgment based upon their lived experiences, or how their lived experiences informed their reality.

During the early stages of my participant observation, I drew upon my conceptualization of educational justice with an orientation towards bearing witness. I carefully attended to how I established the conditions in the three-dimension research space for how the data was collected. Hansen (2017) states, "the act of engaging in fieldwork can also be understood as a medium for bringing philosophy into the world rather than regarding it solely as a commentary on the world" (p. 10). I used the orientation of "bearing witness" as I attended to how my participants lived their stories at the beginning (and throughout) this inquiry. Hansen (2017) states,

> Bearing witness to teaching and teachers constitutes, among other things, an attempt to move beyond objectification and its attendant forms of representation, even while retaining fidelity with the moral and intellectual lineaments of the practice. (p. 14)

I extended this orientation to the young people at both research sites as well. Kim (2016) states, "narrative inquirers need to be phronetic researchers who navigate the world of narrative research with caring reflexivity" (p. 106). Taking the orientation of bearing witness strengthened my practical wisdom, and ability to attend to and collect data in the three-dimensional research space. It also helped me attend to the ethical and moral dimensions of the research project. Kim (2016) states,

> Narrative research as a site of moral responsibility can begin with a development of ethical relationships with our participants. The essence of narrative inquiry lies in this ethical relationship between the researcher and the participant, for narrative inquiry is relational (p. 103).

By attending to my role as a researcher planning for entry, while designing my data collection, I point towards an ethically grounded inquiry in which *my* stories live

alongside the stories I observe and collect.

Researcher positionality. As the researcher, I was the instrument through which my data was collected and analyzed (Luttrell, 2010; Peshkin, 1988) therefore, my socio-political location as a white, non-disabled woman, impacted how my data was collected and analyzed. I discuss my positionality throughout chapters IV, V, and VI because my own lived experiences inform how I collected and in turn interpreted my data. In that vein, while I currently identify as non-disabled, I am fat and have been overweight for most of my life. I share this because in my adult life, each time I visit a new doctor regardless of my visit (e.g., being sick with a throat infection or having a sprained ankle) I am prompted by the doctor (this has occurred upwards of 6 times) to undergo testing for either diabetes and/or a malfunctioning thyroid. To this date, I do not test positive for either of these conditions and while I know I do not currently present symptoms for these conditions, each time, I feel I must submit to the testing.

Most recently, when I entered urgent care due to a bacterial infection, I sat through twenty minutes of a doctor lecturing me about my weight, which was in no way related to the infection, before I was able to seek medical treatment. There is a growing field of research that argues DS should include anti-fatness/fat phobia, but it is recently emerged (Herndon, 2002; Mollow, 2014). I do not claim my experience of being pathologized by doctors due to my weight and physical appearance to be synonymous with that of a disabled (or otherwise labeled) person. I do understand that my lived experience of being pathologized and the resulting personal feelings of being "othered" due to my physical appearance and attributes is part of my positionality as the researcher.

Living. I spent 6 months collecting data at each site (Site 1 and Site 2). I relied

upon ethnographic, narrative and spatial methods to "capture" the experiences and social interactions in restricted educational programs over the data collection period. I intentionally put quotations around terms like "capture" because part of what I wanted to demonstrate through my design was the dynamic and messy nature of stories in spaces. There was little ability to "hold still" what I aimed to study. Gubrium and Holstein (2009) note, "Most ethnographic data collection methods are useful [to the narrative inquirer], but must be fine-tuned to capture sufficient conversational detail" (p. 34). During the first two months at each respective site I engaged primarily in participant observation and artifact collection. The aim of participant observation was to "come alongside" (Clandinin, 2013) my participants in order to determine how they were living their stories.

Participant observation often involved me actively participating in the workshop or classroom site either seated alongside a youth participant, or sometimes towards the back of the room. I always deferred to the classroom teacher or workshop facilitator and attempted to assume the posture of a willing and engaged participant in the day-to-day interactions within each respective space. This made it difficult to maintain detailed field notes in the moment. Instead I took short hand notes in my field journal and often sketched the ongoing interactions between youth and adults during each observation period. As soon as the participant observation period ended I jotted down my initial observations and then dictated the interactions I participated in and observed in a private space using a digital audio recorder. After I returned back to a space where I was able to engage in sustained writing, I developed more detailed field notes based on my field journal and dictated audio recordings. This provided me with a set of descriptive field

notes that included an emphasis on the micro to "later provide in vivo illustrations of narrative practice" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009, p. 35).

Throughout this process I took up multimodal approaches to data collection such as, taking photographs (Pink, 2011), drawing pictures (Lutrell, 2013) and map-making (Powell, 2016) all of which were included in my field notes to help establish a more descriptive and detailed account of how my participants lived their stories.

Telling. In order to understand how my participants told their stories, I conducted "unstructured open ended interviews" (Kim, 2016, p. 164) with adult participants and "semi-structured interviews" (Kim, 2016, p. 164) with youth participants. All interview protocols are included in Appendix C. At the end of the 2nd month of participant observation at each site I began scheduling one-on-one interviews with all youth and adult participants. The interviewing process was intentionally collaborative to involve more participant ownership of interview topics. In order to address some of the power dimensions that surface during a one on one interview (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Through out conducting the semi-structured and open-ended interviews I remained thoughtfully engaged with ways to conduct and structure interviews, which provided multiple pathways for research participants to tell their story. This was based on my training in the field of oral history, which argues for more ethical interview practices focuses on co-creation and transformation (www.oralhistorysummerschool.com).

Since the research design was purposefully unstructured, I developed multimodal approaches as I collected the data for this dissertation. Following Kress (2011) and continuing to ask "what if" in how I collected and represented the data. This encouraged me to "consider [the] multiple modes and material forms of cultural production,

communication and experience" (Powell, 2016, p. 403). During the semi-structured interview with youth, I provided options for drawing or digital collage, but most often, the youth participants indicated they want to speak with me via oral language communication. Similarly, with the adults during open-ended interviewing, this typically took the form of an unstructured conversation centered on how the adults described the restricted educational program where they worked and their lived experiences while working in that program. All interviews were audio-recorded and immediately de-identified. I transcribed all interviews after they were conducted. I completed verbatim audio transcription which involved listening to recorded interviews and typing out each word, phrase and utterance for the entirety of the recorded interview. I then destroyed the audio recording and saved the typed transcript in a password-protected folder. As the study developed I also engaged in the collection of documents, primarily of student work and youth made artifacts (such as web-based portfolios, digital collages, and student writing). Given laws protecting confidentiality of youth records, I was not provided access to student's individualized education plans (IEPs) or court plans.

Reliability and trustworthiness. As I prepared to enter the field, reliability and trustworthiness (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) were important pieces of my method. I used Bogdan & Biklen's (2007) definition of reliability as "consistency between data collected and the world I am studying" (p. 274). I also drew from Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klinger, Pugach & Richardson (2005) discussion of credibility and trustworthiness. Given the highly subjective nature of this research, and my role as the main instrument (Peshkin, 1988) collecting data, I relied on the following qualitative indicators (Brantlinger et al., 2005) to work towards establishing a valid and reliable data corps.

I used triangulation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) in various aspects of this study both methodologically and theoretically (Brantlinger et al., 2005). For my methodological triangulation, I collected multiple data sources such as: descriptive field notes, interviews (semi-structured and open-ended) and documents (student work and/or artifacts). This helped to establish information from a variety of perspectives. My use of the DSE framework along side Critical Spatial theory with ethnographic, narrative and spatial methods provided a theoretical triangulation in pursuit of thick detailed description (descriptive and reflective field notes) that remained flexible to the various perspectives and experiences of my research participants. Other indicators such as a "prolonged field engagement, and a well maintained audit trail" (Brantlinger et al., 2005, p. 201) were already established as part of overall research design. Through out the data collection period I maintained a methods log, which was separate from my detailed ethnographic field notes. In the methods log I kept track of my participant observation schedule, the day-to-day decisions I made while collecting data and my interview schedule. I also included description of any method decisions related to conducting interviews. This log was also separate from the analytic and reflective memos, which I crafted as I developed my detailed field notes. The methods log was also used to organize the process of interview transcription.

Validity. The data collection was iterative (Maxwell, 2005) and reflexive (Luttrell, 2010; Kim, 2016). I engaged in member checking with participants throughout the data collection process. As I stated, I used ongoing memo writing (analytic) and the maintenance of a researcher's journal (reflective memos) to structure the iterative and reflexive nature of the data collection. Polkinghorne (2007) states, "I have been

proposing that validating knowledge claims is not a mechanical process but, instead, is an argumentative practice" (p. 476). This was helpful in that the qualitative orientation of this ethnographic narrative inquiry was not geared towards, or philosophically designed, to prove a lived experience to be true. I developed the instruments for data collection as a means to gather information from research participants in order to build an argument and while this research may not be generalizable, it was oriented to be recognizable (Murphy, 2017, *personal communication)*. My use of member checking and reflexive memo-ing (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011b) were established as part of the research design to remain vigilant about the claims I attempted to make through my data analysis.

Phases of Data Collection

Through participant observation and open-ended /semi structured interviewing, I gained a better understanding and produced data that helped me theorize how my participants described themselves in relation to the restricted educational program they occupied. IRB approval was received by Teachers College on July 17th, 2018. The appropriate paper work was submitted and approved by Site 1 and Site 2 before the recruitment of participants and start of data collection. Data for this dissertation study was collected over a period of 10 months from September 2018 to June 2019. The following chart shows the 4 phases of data collection.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
September 2018-November 2018	November 2018-January 2019	February 2019-April 2019	April 2019 – June 2019
Received IRB approval from Teachers College, and Site 2 (Voices) organization. Began recruitment of research participants. Began participant observation at Site 2. Began developing descriptive and reflective ethnographic field notes. Attended the afterschool program 3-4 times a week for 3-4 hours per visit. Began identification and requirement of Site 1 (Saturn School)	Continued participant observation at Site 2. Continued maintenance of descriptive and reflective field notes. Conducted open-ended style interviews with adult participants at Site 2. Began conducting semi-structured interviews with youth participants at Site 2. Completed paperwork (sharing approved IRB and MOU with organization) to begin data collection at Site 1. (Received approval from Site 1 early Jan 2019).	Started to phase out participant observation at Site 2 (continued to attend until end of March 2019) Began participant observation at Site 1. Began developing descriptive and reflective ethnographic field notes at Site 2. Attended the in-school program 3-4 days a week for 4-5 hours per visit.	Continued participant observations at Site 1. Continued maintenance of descriptive and reflective field notes. Began scheduling and conducting interviews with adult and youth participants. Completed data collection at Site 1 at end of school year (end of June 2019).

Table 1: Phases of data collection across project

Pilot Work on Instruments/Procedures

As a former member of the Reimagining Futures (RF) research team, with Dr. Vasudevan, I volunteered at Voices during the 2014-2015 school year facilitating workshops as a mentor and during the 2015-2016 school year as a research assistant and workshop facilitator. During this time, I had the opportunity to collect field notes before, during, and after conducting workshops. This helped me to develop procedures, such as audio recording and mapping, for participant observation that I relied upon while collecting data for this dissertation. My previous experience as workshop facilitator and researcher also informed my emerging conceptualizations of multimodality as a stance. When I first began facilitating "Creative writing and Storytelling" workshops at Voices, I wanted to provide young people with a space to "write" about the complicated systems in which they were involved. I intentionally place the word "write" in quotes to highlight the socio-cultural orientation (Street, 1995) of the RF project, which viewed writing as a socio-cultural process of mean making that involves more than solely print text and spoken word (Kluth & Chandler-Olcott, 2010). I realized very quickly, that if I asked the young people attending the workshops, "what is it like to be involved in a complicated system (sometimes against your will)?" I was not inviting them to tell their story in a way may not be accessible to their socio-political location in that space. To address this, I developed a series of workshops introducing participants to the cartoonist Rube Goldberg

and the cartoons he drew. It was this experience, as a novice researcher, that led me to take a multimodal approach during my participant observation data collection

During my time on the research team, I realized that most of the data collection occurred while we (myself and the workshop participants—youth and adults) were "living" (Clandinin, 2013) the frustration of attempting to build a complicated machine out of found objects. As we worked together in the workshop, a space developed wherein I could more easily pose the question, "what are some complicated experiences you may have as a young person involved in a system?" Though I did not conduct a series of Rube Goldberg workshops in the research sites for this dissertation study, I did engage in co-constructing a Creative Writing workshop at the Voices afterschool program during data collection with one adult and one youth participant.

In regards to semi-structured and open-ended interviews, I developed a semi-structured interview protocol that I piloted during a course on Narrative Knowing with Dr. Naraian. This built on a protocol I first developed when I was enrolled in the Qualitative Methodologies course with Dr. Knight. Through my pilot study I determined that conducting interviews with the youth *and* adults garnered more data. Part of my pilot work informed my interview protocol as I established an instrument that provided ways for both adult and youth participants to provide responses. This included collaborative interviewing (e.g., an interview with both adult and youth participants). During the dissertation study data collection, at each site I provided youth with the option of conducting the interview alone or with another adult (besides myself). Across both sites and with all participants the interview protocol was intentionally flexible in order to provide for multiple means of communicating ideas that were valued in the same way as

spoken word and written responses.

Methods of Data Analysis

The method of qualitative data analysis was from the field of narrative inquiry and employed multimodal approaches. I used the terms, “storying and re-storying” (Kim, 2016, p. 207 citing Clandinin & Connelly (1990)) to demonstrate how I analyzed data across this project. Since I used the constant comparative method, I began data analysis for Site 2 while I was still collecting data for Site 1 (Kim 2016; Maxwell, 2005).

I began my analysis after a set of descriptive ethnographic field notes were completed and/or an interview was transcribed. Each data source was initially read in its entirety for coherence and content (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). Then, using coding categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) and analytical bracketing (Gubrium & Holsetin, 2009, p. 28) I began to analyze my data based on descriptive codes such as, “interactions between youth and adults” and “youth talking about school”. For each site I developed upwards of 30 descriptive codes or “buckets” where I organized chunks of interview transcript and field note data. Gubrium & Holstein (2009) state, “[analytic bracketing] is a strategy for shifting analytic perspectives in order to capture the complex empirical terrain (p. 29). The key was to establish a neutral stance towards analytical bracketing by using iterative bracketing and coding of sentences and phrases in order to establish that one component or code does not take importance over another (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009, p. 29). After I organized all field note, interview transcript and image data into

descriptive coded buckets I then conducted a second level of analysis where I identified themes and patterns (I refer to this as data refrains in Chapter IV and V) across each respective data set. This was the storying aspect of my analysis, where I began to compose narrative vignettes from my data corps guided by my theoretical framing.

Since a bulk of my data was stories research participants told me, I used analytic bracketing and coding to attend to the whole story as well as the content and form of the story. Not only attending to what was being said, but how it was being said, who was saying it, and perhaps most importantly where it was said. Upon developing the narrative vignettes I met with the research participants involved to determine if the themes I highlighted resonated with their understandings. Member checking (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Kim, 2016) occurred at various points through out the data analysis. This was the process of re-storying. During member checking, if at any point a participant asked me to remove a piece of data, I did so.

Burrowing and broadening[11]

The iterative nature of this research design was threaded throughout the data collection and analysis. In this way, the data analysis involved multiple readings and moments for interpretation and reinterpretation by the researcher. Keyes & Craig (2012) refer to this as burrowing and broadening. Iterative analysis provided me with opportunities to dig deeply into the stories of the participants. Part of how I burrowed and broadened the collected data was through the creation of fugal composition (Plowright,

[11] Keyes & Craig (2012).

Glowrey, Green, Fletcher, Harrison, Plunkett, Emmett & Johnson, 2016; Sparks, Ariel, Coffey, & Tabachnik, 2011) and collaging (Holbrook & Pourchier, 2014). This type of analysis allowed me to begin organizing my data from open codes to data refrains (themes), which I developed into detailed vignettes and descriptions of the day-to-day routines and practices occurring within each respective research site.

Organizing the data using fugue composition. Both Plowright et al. and Sparks et al. base the presentation of their analyzed data on the musical composition of a fugue. Sparks et al, (2011) state,

> A fugue may be considered a variant of polyphony, yet it is distinguished by its careful development of a theme, announced first by one voice and then by several others in overlapping sequence. As the voices continue, they are developed contrapuntally (from the Italian contrappunto, or ‘‘counter point’’), but always in relation to the original theme, which is ‘‘tonally established, continuously expanded, opposed, and reestablished’’ (Randel, 2003, p. 336). (p. 118)

Considering ways to textually represent the contrapuntal reading (Said, 1993) of my data analysis, the fugue was a way to structure the data chapters, which provided opportunities for providing counterpoints to the stories gathered during the data collection. Due to the location of both research sites, as part of larger systems, (e.g., the educational system and the court system), I believed it was unethical not to address the conflicting ideologies currently present in both systems. I draw from Anzaldua (2003) here and her discussion of Nepantla as “in-between-ness”. Anzaldua (2003) states,

> Nepantleras acknowledge an unmapped common ground: the humanity of the other. We are the other, the other is us—a concept AnaLouise Keating calls “re(con)ceiving the other” (*Women,* I75-81). Honoring people’s otherness, las nepantleras advocate a “nos/otras” position—an alliance between “us” and “others”. In nos/ostra, the “us” divided in two, the slash in the middle representing the bridge—the best mutuality we can hope for at the moment”. (p. 570)

It was necessary to acknowledge that some ideas, which may function in direct opposition to the purpose and orientation of this research project, exist alongside the commitments of this inquiry. The data analysis was the site of meaning making for this study, while remaining aware of the various outside structures, which effected and potentially distorted the data that was collected (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009; Polkinghorne, 2007). Once the corps of data was analyzed, I organized the data refrains intentionally to offer various counterpoints based on the themes that emerged from the words and actions of the participants across the two research sites.

Creation of digital collages. I found the multimodal approach of digital collaging helpful to my analysis as a way to surface my own understandings (and possible assumptions) related to the interactions I described in detailed form in my ethnographic field journal and transcribed from my audio-recorded interviews. While my collection methods used multimodal approaches (such as mapping and collecting visual data), all my collected data save for my still digital photos, were text based. Holbrook & Pourchier (2014) state,

> As collagists, we literally fabricate meaning through our texts. Therefore, we find that terms such as data, data collection, and data analysis fail to describe what we do when we research. Instead of organizing our work into "inadequate existing concepts" (St. Pierre, 2011, p. 613), we take up alternative terms. We recognize that these concepts have already failed us because language is never able to fully capture how we think the world. (p. 758)

I found engaging in traditional qualitative data collection (detailed typed ethnographic field notes and interview transcripts) along with digital collaging techniques helped enliven my own thinking with my research data. It helped me to point towards the pieces of my data that were not readily conveyed via the written word. Since all of the still

photographic images I captured were digital, I began collecting a range of other digital images, sometimes photos I took of other objects or patterns, and other times stock photos which I located via Google image search. I amassed a file of images, which I used to create digital collages, using the Keynote slide software. Similar to how Holbrook & Pourchier describe the process of collaging engaging with digital collage creation allowed me to access a part of my data that I felt language (aural /verbal) did not fully capture.

As I began to organize my analyzed data I realized it primarily consisted of narrative vignettes, interview transcripts and ethnographic field notes. Placing the data alongside one another to develop Chapter IV and Chapter V of the dissertation, I began to think of my data analysis construction as a Fugue, which is a type of musical composition. Choosing to structure the data chapters like a fugue and engaging in digital collage as analysis were two ways I nod towards how engaging in artistic practice through my research design, collection and analysis helped enrich my analytical thinking (Saldana, 2015). I encouraged myself to think more expansively, and spatially about my collected data.

Limitations of the Study

Some DS/DSE orientated researchers use ethnography as a form of emancipatory research, (Barnes, 2014; Davis, 2000; Goodley, 2001) which also problematizes the strong social model from a methodological standpoint. Similarly, my research design requires that I move beyond the strong social model (Goodley, 2010) wherein a

researcher (typically informed by DS/DSE) argues that disability categories are social constructions and this conceptualization must be used through out the data collection and analysis. To some DSE researchers my choice to blend the social model is a limitation of this research. As I stated in the introduction to this chapter, my choice to design a qualitative study, is potentially viewed as a limitation because my findings are not generalizable beyond the specific socio-spatial-location where the study was enacted (Maxwell, 2005). As I show, this was an intentional choice and addressed in the data collection and analysis. Still, the reliability and validity of this study, especially for a researcher from a quantitative background remains a significant limitation.

How the Remainder of This Dissertation Is Organized

As discussed, the fugue is style of music composition, from the Western tradition, which follows a specific structure. In a fugue the opening section is called an exposition. In the exposition the composer writes a main melody (subject), which plays on its own, until a second voice (answer) is introduced which is a transposed version of the subject. Once the second voice completes, another voice enters and builds on the main melody and counterpoint introduced by the second voice. This repeats until all voices are introduced into the piece at which point the exposition ends. Some view the fugue as a fixed structure, but in fact it is a style of music composition. An organized way of writing music within a structure that introduces voices using counterpoint to provide robust tonal music.

Fugue

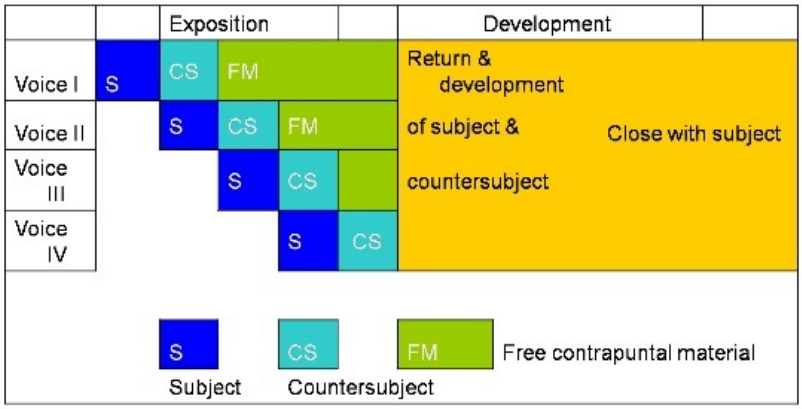

Figure 4: Visual representation of how a fugue composition is organized

As I discussed earlier in this chapter as I began to organize my analyzed data for this dissertation I noted the various refrains (themes) present across both sets of data. Due to my conceptual framing and the orientation I used to approach this research, I hesitated to neatly organized narrative data into charts and visual representations. The compositional fugue, then, became a way of organizing and presenting the data, which lent itself to how the data refrains acted in layered harmonious ways via counterpoint or contrapuntal stories as I conducted the analysis.

As I organized the analyzed data I envisioned a main melody, something that happened during data collection, which served as a refrain, a reoccurring pattern across the ethnographic field notes, interview transcripts, student artifacts and visual data. Then, a second refrain would emerge, another set of data, transposing the first voice, shifting

the perspective, and offering another example, a counterpoint. Then, another refrain emerged, and another adding depth the patterns from across the data. Placing data chunks alongside one another offered an understanding of the lived experiences of both the youth and adults in this study.

Chapters IV and V each begin with an Exposition, which draws from youth interview data, artifacts and my detailed ethnographic field notes. I intentionally crafted the opening sections in Chapter IV and V from the youth data points and placed them at the beginning of each respective chapter to surface youth interactions and stories in order to let them breath (Frank, 2010). Youth are often inundated in the thoughts, actions and opinions of the adults around them. I attempted to resist this textually, by placing the Expositions derived from youth data at the beginning the chapters. Before subsuming the youth data in the adult data, which, as in a fugue, modulates and transposes the youth refrains. After the Exposition section in Chapter IV and V concludes, I present the Development section, which is comprised of several more data refrains primarily from the adult interview transcripts, artifacts and my detailed ethnographic field notes. This structure is followed for chapters IV and V, each chapter focusing on the data collected at Site 2 (Chapter IV) and Site 1 (Chapter V) respectively.

The power and beauty of a fugue comes across in *how* the composer develops the melodies through transposition and creating counterpoint, or contrapuntal harmonies. As the following data chapters were constructed, I took on the role of composer, stitching together lines of melody from the lived experiences of my research participants identifying thoughts and ideas which resonated into refrains across the collected data. So much of this was embodied in the ways I collected data, both observing and participating

across several months in each respective restricted educational program. The result was a fugue of interaction, with different viewpoints and perspectives shared and described. It was this ability to develop a highly structured finite composition, in this case a fugue, which I hope offers a new way to think about how lived experiences are "used" in research as a way to make sense of highly complex, messy and layered systems. Finally, fugues (compositionally) are traditionally played after a prelude. A prelude is thought of as a preface, which introduces other successive music compositions, typically a fugue. The first three chapters of this dissertation: Chapter I: Introduction, Chapter II: Literature Review and Chapter III: Research Design, serve as the Prelude for chapters IV, V, & VI.

Chapter IV

VOICES, AN ALTERNATIVE TO DETENTION PROGRAM

Exposition One

Introducing Nia and Joanna

I first met Nia, a female youth participant in this study from the Voices afterschool program, on a hot, sticky afternoon in early September, right before the first week of public school. I was beginning my data collection at the Voices program and was participating in, and observing the first workshop, which was a Family event on the topic of Back to School. I always thought of Nia in the context of our first meeting because of a comment she made during the Back to School night workshop where Nia stated that she hated school, which was followed by her stating that one day she wanted to be a high school principal. The contradiction of this statement initially struck me as funny, but later it made perfect sense. Of course someone who does not like school might want a job where they were tasked with running a school. This led me to consider Nia as a thoughtful, if somewhat contradictory, young person who wanted more control over the interlocking systems (school and court) within which she was situated, or as she might

say, “stuck”. I share another encounter with Nia, a few months later, which builds upon how Nia described herself within said interlocking systems.

It was a late afternoon in mid-November, and the early darkness was slowly beginning to shadow the city buildings. Looking out the window of the workshop room, the sky was turning a deep blue and the weather was slightly crisper than the previous weeks, hinting at a coming change of seasons. Inside the city building where the Voices alternative-to-detention afterschool program was held, the air was warm and illuminated by bright ceiling lights. The Youth Research workshop was starting and the adult facilitators and youth participants were seated in a small circle of green rolling seats with attached cream-colored desks. There were two youth in the workshop and they were seated next to one another facing myself, and the two adult workshop facilitators.

It was early in the workshop cycle, which began in late September, so once the check-in ended (where all participants – youth and adults shared their high and lows for the week), the adult facilitators began asking the youth participants about the term “research” and what this meant to them. The youth participating in the workshop appeared a bit leery at first. One in particular, Nia was spinning slowly in her chair, avoiding eye contact with the adult facilitators. Another youth asked, “But I don’t understand, why would anyone care about what we have to say? What is the point of this workshop?” Nia quickly sat up in her chair with a straight back. She turned to the youth and said, “I know what you mean. People don’t listen to us. They think we bad kids.” There was a moment of silence as both

adult facilitators nodded in agreement. One facilitator said, "I don't see y'all that way, but let's talk about that. Why do you think that?" Nia explained that she knows that she and the other youth were at Voices because they had been arrested. She shared that she believed most people assumed that kids who had been arrested were bad. She noted she even felt that way sometimes. Both facilitators nodded their heads. "Where do you think this idea might come from?" the second adult facilitator mused. Nia slowly shook her head from side to side. "From everywhere!"

As I sat in the workshop room with Nia, the two adults, and the other youth participants I was struck by how Nia's comment, "they think we bad kids" addressed the interlocking systems of court involvement and labeling, how one action (being arrested) turned an entire space (the Voices program) into a place to which the label "bad" was affixed. Since I had experience with the Voices program I knew there was a trajectory for youth attending the program, which I had witnessed previously. It typically began with hesitancy; a youth entered the Voices program often with very little trust and made statements such as Nia's, generally meant to incite the adults (Park, 2010). The way the adults in the workshop interacted with Nia was also typical of what I had observed at Voices in the past. Instead of supplying Nia with shocked or hurt response the adult facilitators nodded empathetically. This gesture indicated, "Yes, I hear what you (Nia) are saying and I understand what you mean about being perceived as 'bad.'"

By affirming what Nia said, by nodding their heads, the adult facilitators produced a space in which Nia was heard and responded to. Her comment was not

brushed away; instead, the adult facilitator responded to her directly, “I don’t see y'all that way.” The adult did not let Nia provoke her into anger or a defensive stance. Her response showed Nia that this adult (workshop facilitator) did not align with the “they” of Nia’s statement. By stating, “But let’s talk about it. Why do you think that?” the workshop facilitator invited Nia to respond to her own comment. This was an example of a youth and adult interaction I participated in and observed many times at Voices during my data collection for this dissertation. This also shaped the trajectory of many youth attending the program, one that shifted from antagonistic hesitancy to serve as a willing participant and then active collaborator.

Nia seemed to equate the Voices program with being labeled a “bad kid.” When she said, “They think we bad kids,” she (whether intentionally or not) referenced the historical disenfranchisement of people like Nia, a young Black female, in a large city environment. By occupying a specific space, an ATDP for youth, Nia became a bad kid. The action of sending Nia to this program, due to her legal infraction, caused her to label herself "bad." Over time, I did notice a shift in how Nia engaged with the adults at Voices. By late mid-December she was willing to share about her break up with her boyfriend and in March she was leading the discussion about gentrification (a proposed research topic for the workshop).

My interaction with Joanna, another youth participant at the Voices program during this study was wholly different. On the afternoon of Halloween I came over to the Voices program expecting most youth would skip that day because of the “holiday”. When I entered the program space, I encountered Joanna who was seated alone at the large table in the middle room. She was seated quietly looking at her phone. The case

manager, Melissa, let me know that no other youth had come in that day, so I went into the room and introduced myself to Joanna. I asked if I could sit down next to her and Joanna looked at me and curtly said, “Fine.” I sat alongside her and took out my phone, and we sat for several minutes, side by side, looking at our phones. Eventually I broke the ice by telling Joanna how badly I needed a new phone (which was true) because my current phone battery kept dying. This statement started our conversation and I began to tell Joanna more about who I was, a researcher interested in her experiences while attending the Voices program. Joanna told me she wanted to be a writer and that at school she barely had time to write. She shared that when she did write at school it was rarely creative writing. She appeared excited by the fact I was working on a project that I had designed (of course with lots of help from other people).

Based on Joanna’s expressed interest in creative writing, I offered to run a writing workshop once a week during my data collection. I saw this as part of the reciprocity of my research project, which also allowed me to form a relationship with Joanna. In our creative writing workshops Joanna began developing a series of narratives about a young woman named “Iva” who chose to leave her community in a city setting and attend college in a rural location several hours from her home. In this new environment, Iva faced many violent and damaging experiences such as sexual assault and resulting institutionalization because no one in the new community believed Iva when she reported her assault. Throughout her development of the story, Joanna kept insisting that she wanted the treatment facility (which she referred to as a “psychiatric hospital”) where Iva was sent to have a name that suggested it was a happy and soothing place, when in fact it was neither of those things.

There were a few workshop sessions where Joanna and another male participant had an involved discussion about a local youth detention facility. Each shared that when they heard the name of the facility they envisioned a peaceful setting sun or a bright future with many possibilities. In one of these conversations Joanna stated that she attended this detention center briefly and while the entire inside was painted a bright orange it was one of the worst places she had ever been in her life. In this way, the development of Joanna's writing, which included violent acts such as rape, drugging and the eventual murder of Iva's rapist, by Iva herself, seemed to dance closely with Joanna's own personal experiences which she rarely, if ever, shared with me.

When I asked Joanna how she would describe the Voices program, she indicated that it was a place where adults listened to youth. She told me, "usually after school before I started coming to Voices I would get in trouble a lot. So, I feel like it really helped me stay out of trouble. I feel like the people that come here they are really respectful and they listen."

Through the ongoing novel creation I witnessed the importance of providing Joanna with a place to write creatively, as a way to process her life experience, whether rooted in real or fictionalized experiences. This support emanated from the social processes of the adults and youth from within the workshop space. At Voices, Joanna was viewed as a creative storyteller, someone who wanted to be a writer and publish novels. In school Joanna told me she was viewed as a troublemaker, and during my data collection I learned (from Joanna) that she was facing a superintendent's suspension from her school for fighting with another student.

At Voices, Joana was viewed as a sensitive artist, who cut her hair short and dyed it red to play with her own artistic sensibility. She also told me that she was bullied for this at school. During our interview Joanna told me, “I feel like, when I’m with other people—I’m always with people—when I’m with people, I’m not myself. But when I come to Voices I could be myself here.” These encounters with Nia and Joanna allowed me to come alongside them through sharing a space, but it also allowed for us to imagine spaces (Massey, 2005), where youth were not “bad kids” but aspiring principals and published authors.

Development One: The Description and Practices of the Voices ATDP

The Voices program is part of a constellation of services related to juvenile justice and the court system for youth aged 7-16. Voices is an Alternative to Detention Program (ATDP), that is part of a larger organization, Journeys, which supports a range of alternative sentencing options, and preventative services for youth and adults involved in the criminal justice system. This varies in the United States on a state-by-state basis, but, in the state where Voices is located, the consequence for a legal infraction is determined based on the severity of the crime committed. Alternative sentencing provides more options in lieu of sending someone to jail/prison for a minor offense while their court case is being adjudicated or during sentencing (www.cases.org). The Voices ATDP is community-based program which youth are mandated to attend by a family court judge as a consequence for committing a minor offense. Historically when youth were arrested they were sent away to what is referred to as a detention facility while their court case

was adjudicated (Ben-Moshe, 2014; Bissell-Brown, 1990). Voices ATDP is located in the communities it serves, which allows youth to remain in their homes, and attend their schools while enrolled in the program.

Journeys was formed in 1989 through the merging of two programs focused on alternatives to incarceration for sentencing, and community service as a consequence for low level crime, respectively. Its original aim was to offer alternatives for youth and adults involved in criminal court cases at the time of sentencing. Since its original formation, the services of the Journey's organization have grown beyond merely options for sentencing to address a variety of preventative options across the range of legal infractions within the criminal justice system (www.cases.org).

In this chapter I develop the preceding exposition with Nia and Joanna. The first data refrain is a description of the physical Voices program space; the second is historical, drawn from my ethnographic field notes and adult interview data to describe the genesis of the Voices program to how the program is organized today. The final refrains are drawn from my ethnographic field notes, adult interviews, transcripts, informal conversations and encompass the daily routines within the Voices program highlighting key practices which elucidate the interactions occurring amongst youth and adults in the Voices program.

The Voices program is located in four of the major districts of the large Northeastern city within which it is located. For this dissertation study, the Voices location in Center City was the main site of data collection. As a result of how the Voices program is run there were some instances where data collection occurred at the Voices North location. Specific events, such as Family Nights, the Thanksgiving celebration, and

Back to School night, were hosted at the Voices North location, but included youth participants from Center City. Alexis, the educational director, and Kyle, the team leader/social worker worked at both the Center City and North locations. Melissa worked as a case manager at the City Center location only. Prior-to that position, Melissa worked at the Voice North location as a Family Liaison/Coordinator. Each program, Center City and Voices North has its own specific character. Since most data was collected at the Center City location I begin this chapter with a physical description of the Center City Voices location.

The Space(s) of Voices: Description of the Physical Space

The Center City Voices location is housed in a large art-deco building that has 12 floors. Each floor houses different non-profit organizations, such as community-based groups, a mental health clinic, afterschool tutoring programs, and satellite college offices. The Voices Center City offices are located on an upper floor in the building. Upon entering the building lobby there is a friendly desk attendant who never asks for ID. This means that people freely enter and exit the lobby. The elevators, which are used to access the higher floors, are located directly behind the desk attendant. The lobby is typically crowded with several people waiting to use the elevator.

The floor on which Voices is located has two wings, separated into adult and youth programming. The Voices program at Center City shares space with the parent organization, Journeys. Early on in my data collection the educational director, Alexis, explained to me the youth and adult programs were intentionally located in two separate physical locations. Upon arriving at the floor where Voices is located there is a small

lobby in front of the elevators behind two glass doors. During the hours of 9-5 p.m., the glass doors are open allowing for entrance to the main lobby. After 5pm the glasses doors are closed and locked, such that entrance to the lobby is not permitted. Upon entering the lobby there is a large square desk behind which two staff members are seated. They are tasked with signing in visitors and answering the phones. After checking in, and signing the visitors' log, the staff member, seated behind the desk, pushes a button that unlocks the door to whichever side is visited. There is a buzzing sound to indicate that the door is unlocked, allowing for entrance.

The “youth side” is comprised of a central core of open offices (cubicles) on the main part of the floor. These open offices are placed towards the center and left of the floor. Each open office is arranged in a pod, with several cubicles placed side by side, which the various youth programs at Journeys are located. The Voices program has its own dedicated pod, which consists of four cubicles making a large square. The cubicles face outwards, such that an adult seated at their cubicle has her back to the other co-workers in the space. This also leaves the center of the pod open. One of the cubicle “workstations” (as they are referred to by the Voices staff) belonged to Melissa, the Center City case manager for Voices. The other three workstations rotate among the staff members who are at Center City on that day. On a given day Kyle may sit at the workstation next to Melissa but on another day the Court Liaison occupies it.

The back wall of the floor is lined with closed offices, which vary in size but are fairly small with room for no more than 2-3 people at a time. The general rule is that case managers and family liaisons work in the open office pod cubicle. The court liaisons, social workers and educational director each work in a closed office. Alexis, the

educational director, was the only Voices staff member with a permanent office at the Center City location. Kyle and other Voices staff members, such as the court liaison, often worked in the open office pod because other adults in the Journeys organization occupied all the closed office space, not affiliated with Voices. This meant that besides Melissa's dedicated workstation and Alexis's office, the adult staff at Voices rotated through the open office pod and closed offices spaces.

During our interview Alexis explained that the Center City location is unique in that the physical space is shared with the parent organization, Journeys administrative offices. Alexis shared that it was preferred that each of the Voices locations not share physical space with Journeys to provide the youth with their own space but due to the cost of renting an additional space in Center City, this location was a shared. Outside of the Voices pod, where youth from Voices are allowed to hang out before program starts, there is no space at the Center City location, which is explicitly for Voices youth to occupy. There are three rooms on the "youth side" which Voices uses for the workshop programming. They are located on the exterior wall of the building across from the open office cubicles. One of the rooms is a computer lab and the other two are multipurpose rooms, one with a large table and the other with rolling chairs (which allows for more flexible set up). While the "youth side" is shared between a few programs, the Center City location is fairly empty after 4pm, as most of the administrative staff at Journeys finishes work at 5pm. This gives the youth attending Voices use of the space at least from the hours of 4-7pm.

During our interview Kyle described some of the limitations with the Center City Voices location. She said,

> I think the way the space is divided here [Center City], it's so closed off and the populations are so very different [referring to the older youth programs]. They [youth attending Voices] can go into the computer room, sure. But it's not like that's their space. They could sit at my old desk next to Melissa, sure, but then the MAP guy's [another adult staff member at Journeys] going to come in and need his desk. They have nowhere here that's theirs. When they're here, it's like they don't have space to themselves.

Kyle suggests this lack of ownership of the space is a negative aspect of the Center City Voices location. As a sort of compromise the open office pod, where Melissa's desk was located, was where youth's artwork, poetry and other artifacts were hung up and displayed. Mixed media collages lined the interior cubicle wall and photo-collages of former youth participants are placed alongside Melissa's desk, above the spot where youth sign in upon arriving at the program. Since, as stated, the youth side of the space was fairly empty after 4 p.m., the youth were allowed to sit and hang out in the open office pod with Melissa if they arrived at the program early and did not want to use the computer lab. Having offered an extended description of what the Center City location looks like and how it is organized I now turn to a description of the history of the Voices program which includes how the organization began and is currently organized.

History of Voices ATDP

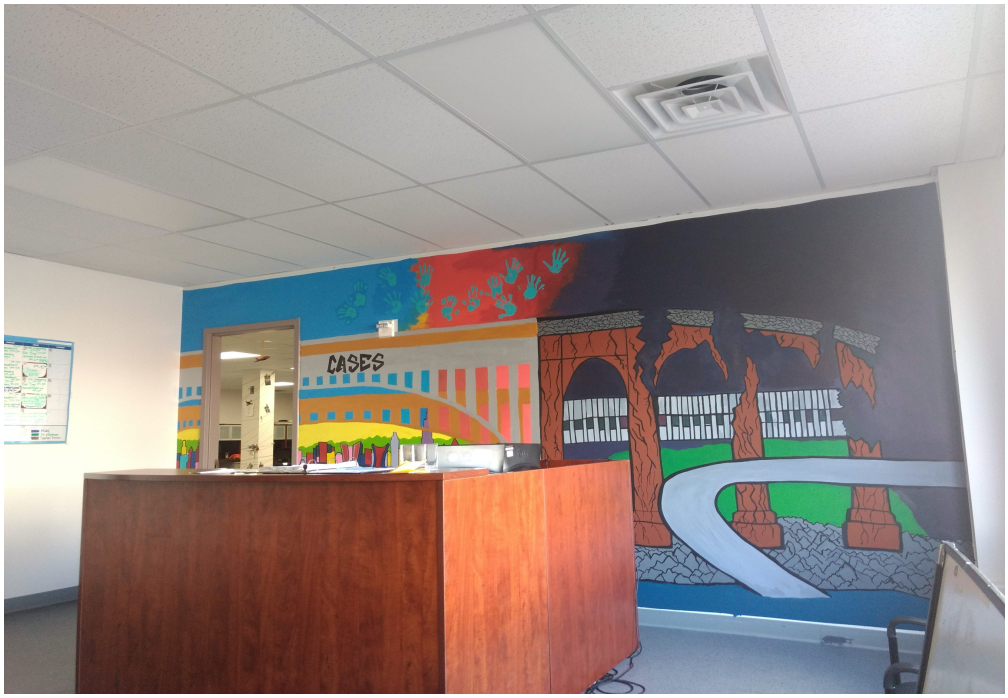

Figure 5: The lobby of the Voices North location.

The Voices program began enrolling youth in 2008 and is one of the youth programs offered by its parent organization, Journeys. Voices, now entering its 11th year started as an alternative option to detainment for youth aged as young as 7 to 18 years old. Prior-to the creation of the Voices program, the Journey's program offered services and programs for dealing with courts, arrest and incarceration, but typically to youth aged 16 and older.

Alexis, the educational director (at the time of this dissertation study), was part of the original team at Voices when the program began enrolling young people. Alexis shared,

> We started in 2007 and I didn't join the team until 2008. That first year was a lot of designing the program, figuring it out. It started off very basic. Around 2010-2011 is when we really started having [the] substance, with the afterschool programming. The OCFS [Office of Child and Family services] contract, I believe we got in 2009-2010. Then in 2015 we got the Voice North [location] so we expanded to another district.

Alexis was an employee of the Journeys organization before her involvement in the Voices program. She shared,

> When the opportunity came up to work for Voices and I found out about the ages, first of all it was shocking to know that a 7-year-old can be charged in court. Finding out that there was this program that was catching youth at even an earlier stage in their lives, before they even got involved in criminal court. There was an opportunity to reach these youth in family court, before they were charged as adults, before they got anything in their record. I knew I had to try that.

Alexis describes an orientation towards prevention as opposed to intervention that was present at the Voices program from its inception. The emphasis on providing alternatives to detention for youth involved the family court was geared towards identifying supports for addressing potential challenges or barriers in a young person's life, which may have led to a legal infraction. Instead of a deficit orientation, which presumed court involved youth are broken and need to be fixed. Voices offered a more holistic approach aimed at identifying ways to support youth in service of creating sustainable practices for staying out of the courts system (i.e., not committing another legal infraction).

Still, in its initial iteration these remained ideas about how to work with youth. Over the years, these ideas were actualized by the adults working at Voices into daily practices. These are explored later in this chapter. Charting this history Alexis noted, "At first it started off with just getting attendance and it wasn't making an impact. I was just getting a sheet of paper and writing it down in the system." As Voices established itself as a ATDP program, (i.e., that case judges were mandating youth to attend) it became

clearer to Alexis and her fellow staff members that there needed to be a concerted focus on engaging the youth attending the program. In order to allow the program to grow beyond "just getting attendance." Alexis noted that the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) grant from 2010-2015 provided a line of funding that allowed her and the former co-director of the program to hire workshop facilitators to help design programming. This meant that Voices was not required to use their internal budget to pay for the workshops. Alexis shared,

> The facilitators and the partnerships that we built is really what helped Voices become what it is. That's how we slowly became this afterschool program with enrichment services and all these trips and activities, like camping. It was so funny because it was such a varied group. We had everything from drumming to meditation to theater, dance and writing. We had math workshops. We had everything that you could possibly think of. We had sports. We had a boxing instructor. We had a basketball coach!

One thing that came along with receiving the funding from OCFS for the workshop programming was that it required the Voices program to accept a slightly different profile of justice-involved youth. Alexis shared,

> We had a very diversified group. It was great and it really showed. With that contract [OCFS] we also got some high-risk youth, which we didn't normally accept but with this contract we were able to bring in high-risk youth. There is low, medium and high. Our programs were designed mostly for medium-risk, but we sometimes get low-risk, we sometimes get high-risk. This contract allowed us to really work with this high-risk group and violation-of-probation youth. So it opened up the doors to this whole other group of kids that needed services and, I'm not going to lie, were harder to engage.

Before the OCFS funding Voices primarily enrolled youth labeled low- to-medium risk. This typically meant it was the young person's first offense and the arresting incident was a minor offense, such as petty theft, hopping a turnstile in the subway system, or moving about the city without government identification. Alexis discussed how "high-risk youth" typically meant a young person who had committed more than one legal infraction

(and/or as Alexis stated, had violated parole). In the beginning youth labeled "high-risk" were less likely to attend Voices, even though it was mandated. Alexis shared,

> These kids [high-risk youth] were coming to us with no trust in the system. People were constantly in and out of their lives, not following up on what they had promised, not genuinely caring what happened. I'm not saying this is everybody, but most, a lot of them had experienced this. We [adult at Voices] realized that we really need to gain their trust, before we can even think about having them engage in the program.

I elaborate on the practice Alexis describes here of developing relationships and the ways the adults at Voices set the conditions to establish trust with youth in the Daily Routines section of this chapter. For now, it is important to note Alexis's description that building trust was an important first step towards engaging youth and encouraging youth's attendance and participation in the program. Part of how this trust was built developed through the adults at Voices identifying the various domains (e.g., school, home/family, community) where a young person may require additional support. Alexis shared,

> You really have to figure out all the points that could affect this youth. Is the community going to be an issue? Does the family need the support? Does the educational component need to be more focused on? It's like learning all these different areas of the youth and really trying to tie it all together. It's hard because we literally have possibly four months to do it.

The emphasis on identifying areas where youth may require additional support was an important feature of the Voices program. Once a youth was enrolled at Voices, the adults worked to address the factors in a youth's life that may influence their likelihood of successfully completing the program and not being re-arrested. A large piece of this was getting youth in the door, attending and participating in the program. This offered the adults at Voices ways to build relationships with youth and determine the types of support to extend to them and their families. This deliberate focus on engaging youth

mandated to attend the program to help maintain a consistent record of the youth's attendance and participation remained a core focus of Voices as it evolved.

As Alexis also described, the Voices program was a temporary program, lasting typically from six weeks to four months. Each month a report was completed by the assigned Voices case managers and sent to the case judge. This report served as a progress report for the case judge to use to chart a young persons' progress while participating in Voices and eventually determined the outcome of the case. The report included information about a youth's program attendance record, school attendance record and participation record. This also meant that each month youth and their families had to appear in front of the case judge.

The youth mandated to attend Voices were heavily surveilled and system-involved. Early in the program development this was made clear to the adults working at Voices. Many families of the youth attending Voices were dealing with multiple systems: the courts systems, foster care systems, and school systems. This sometimes created confusion and isolation for the families. This was a taxing experience for youth and for their families as well. This led to the creation of Family Night events and forums. Alexis shared,

> That's when we came up with the family piece. We started doing the family nights, which was dinner and games or whatever activity we thought they [youth and their families] might enjoy together. Then we started seeing, that families would stay longer than expected. We would have dinner and play games. We started noticing the families would continue to stay and want to talk and vent and then share stories. We realized that it seemed to be very therapeutic for them and helpful. So, that's how we created the [family] workshops and the forums. The forums [became] an opportunity for us to bring resources to the families and the workshops were an opportunity for the families to learn about something that would be helpful to them.

Over the years the Voices program evolved into an afterschool program, which offered monthly Family events/forums, daily workshop programming and support services for youth. Beyond the daily workshop offerings, which Alexis described above, the adult case managers at Voices met with in-school professionals (administrators and teachers) to provide more context for the young person enrolled in the program. This also helped the adult staff at Voices determine if the youth was receiving the proper academic and social/emotional supports during their school day. In these ways, Voices offered support across a variety of spaces youth occupied while participating in the program. This commitment to the community in which the youth lived, and where the program was located were paramount. In her discussion of what brought her to work in the Voices program, Melissa, the Center City Voices case manager explained,

> I wanted to work with the juvenile justice population. They [Voices] looked at it like the youth is not guilty and they deserve a second chance. Everyone deserves a second chance. Journeys, as an organization—they portrayed themselves as giving the youth a second chance but also giving adults a second chance. A lot of the people that I work with, they're in the criminal justice system and Journeys gave them an opportunity to share their story with the youth.

Melissa touches upon a hiring practice of the Journeys organization that is followed by Voices: the adult staff members were considered for employment regardless of their previous experience with the criminal justice system. Sometimes adults were hired *because* of their past involvement in juvenile or criminal justice. The Journey's employment website page includes a statement, which reads: "Journeys is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer…We also actively recruit individuals with prior involvement in the criminal justice system" (Retrieved from www.cases.org, 9/27/19). The approach towards hiring people with "prior involvement in the criminal justice system" was similar to a capacity orientation, which draws on the knowledge a person

derives from lived experience and brings to a given profession/situation (Simplican, 2015).

The requirement of many, if not most educational hiring systems, such as, public school systems, requires a criminal background check. This requirement is based on the idea that a person with a previous criminal record is potentially dangerous and therefore incapable of working with young people. The capacity orientation, which Journeys takes up is a way for the organization to remain connected to the community of youth and adults that it serves. Journeys and by extension Voices upheld this logic in their practice of hiring adults who have been arrested, and viewing these community members as assets, not burdens. This act of local citizenship, valuing the lived experiences of community members who were also court involved shows how the Journeys (and Voices) organizations maintain a capacity based orientation towards adults and youth. At Journeys justice involved adults were viewed as community members from whom youth could learn. Kyle affirmed this when she stated,

> Having the diversity of our staff is also really important. They [adult staff members] all have different backgrounds and different interests, and passions. I think that's something really cool for the kids to see. Hey you can be a 35 year old from the City who's been locked up for a total of 10 years and then come out and go to an Ivy League institution and have all these interests.

In the above quote Kyle was referring to another Voices case manager employed at the Voices North location that was previously incarcerated and currently pursuing his Master's in Sociology. Kyle valued the staff member's lived experiences and suggested that it provided an example for youth attending the program. As was often the case, it was more difficult for youth to discern a future or see beyond the exact moment in which they found themselves. Providing examples, in real time, via the adults working at the

program who had lived experience with the justice system, helped with engaging the youth. This became another way of building trust and developing relationships with youth at Voices. Melissa shared,

> I draw a lot of my approach with the youth and even with the family from my past experience being in the system and how I felt at that time. How I felt trying to ask for help, how I felt trying to speak to people that were in more power than me and a better position than me. I look at it like: they [youth in Voices program] might feel similar to how I felt when the power dynamic was so different. They [youth] have a lot of issues when it comes to trusting people and getting close with people. They [youth] lash out and do things for attention and the behavior's not always positive, of course, but I look at it like: she [youth] might feel that way or do those things because of things that happened in her past. I felt like that's really important. Sharing that they're not alone and I'm not judging them and also I ask they don't judge me so we're kind of on the same grounds.

These hiring practices helped shape how the Voices program was currently structured. The Voices program actively worked to staff their program with adults who shared experiences of court involvement as well as adults who took up an open-minded orientation, striving to locate youth's assets.

There remains a potential danger that when adults draw from their personal experiences it is possible to make assumptions about young people mandated to attend Voices. Soja (2010) states, "Although often out of our conscious awareness, distance-minimizing behavior is a fundamental part of our spatial being and our socially produced geographies" (p.72). Sometimes when an adult attempts form a relationship with a young person and "minimize distance" there is a failure to acknowledge the multitude of lived experiences. As an example, on a superficial level there may appear to be a natural connection, such as, both the adult facilitator and young person share a similar cultural background, but this does not mean the adult may enforce or make assumptions based on this perceived similarity (and/or vice versa). Therefore, the program worked to maintain a

tenuous equilibrium, often using personal experiences (from the adults) to establish relationships while maintaining a posture of humility that one person can never truly know the thoughts and feelings of another and the spaces this type of "knowing" may produce.

Today, the Voices program maintains some of its afterschool programming, though due to loss of the OFCS funding during the Spring of 2015, there were fewer contracted workshops and more internal planning. This required the adult staff at Voices to take on more responsibility for the workshop topic planning and development. Most recently, there was also a reduction in the number of youth referred (mandated) to attend the Voices program.

During one afternoon while I was waiting for youth to arrive at the program Kyle shared with me that she attended the monthly ATD meeting where all the ATD programs in Center City and the surrounding area meet to share resources, practices and to remain up-to-date on information related to juvenile justice. Kyle told me that "youth numbers were down" across Center City and its surrounding areas in terms of youth enrolled (or mandated to attend) ATDPs. She expressed curiosity as to why there was a drop in enrollment and said it might have something to do with the recent legislation passed in the city, which raised the age of criminal responsibility from 16 to 18 years old (https://criminaljustice.cityofnewyork.us/programs/raise-the-age/). Most of the information, Kyle shared, was based on quantitative data about youth enrollment and attendance from the previous quarter which was Spring-Summer. The meeting she attended was in late October. She noted that there were new alternative-to-incarceration programs, such as a surveillance initiative, which consisted of youth wearing ankle-

tracking bracelets in lieu of attending a community-based ATD or being remanded to a detention facility.

This meant that the numbers of youth attending Voices was greatly reduced during my data collection period. In previous years there were two case managers and a social worker at the Center City location. During this study Melissa was the only full time Voices staff member at Center City. She typically worked from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. each day. She shared that while her current position was case manager she was working two roles. Melissa said,

> I have a caseload. Our max is 20. Right now I currently have six kids on my caseload and every day I'll do outreach to either their schools, and to their families, to get updates on how the youth are doing in the community. Each of the kids [has] a court appearance that they have to attend and we have to make a court report before that. I might accompany the parents and the youth to their court appearance if they want the extra support or any type of appointment that they may have like a therapy appointment. They might want extra support and we're able to accompany them as well.

Much of what Melissa described above was related to her job as a case manager. Melissa was also responsible for planning and organizing the weekly schedule of afterschool programs at Center City. She was often the only adult affiliated with the Voices program at Center City and therefore, responsible for the young people attending the program from 4-7 p.m. each day. Most evenings as I left the Voices program Melissa was the only staff member left on the "youth side" of the building unless it happened to be an afternoon where Kyle and/or Alexis came over from the Voice North location.

During this dissertation study the adult staff members at Voices created most of the workshops I observed. There were still some workshops from outside contractors, and/or volunteers, such as, the Youth Researcher's Project, Boxing, Silk screening, and Arts and poetry writing. The family events/forums continued to be held on a monthly

basis. The youth attending the program continued to report to their case judge on a monthly basis. As Melissa explained, Voices continued to offer wrap around services, determining if a youth and or their family required support in the domains of school, or community while attending the program. In a political climate where preventive services are often defunded in order to provide more surveillance or increased police presence in a community, the Voices program of today persisted, continuing to evolve and partner with other organizations to determine ways to support youth and offer meaningful afterschool alternatives to detention.

In the next section I offer several more refrains that moved across the data collected for this dissertation and which were related to the daily interactions of youth and adults within the Voices program. These refrains are organized around interactions geared towards building trust with youth such as deep listening and responding with care, flexibility towards limitless possibilities and engagement towards collaboration. They stretched across all data I collected: the ethnographic field notes, adult interview transcript data, informal conversations, and youth artifacts.

Daily Routines of the Voices Program

Interactions geared towards building trust *with* youth

This section begins with a vignette, which occurred during a workshop cycle at Voices in mid-December 2018. The Youth Research Project workshop, referenced in the Exposition preceding this chapter, was an hour-long weekly workshop designed to teach youth about the research process through ongoing collaborative research projects. The

purpose of this workshop cycle was for youth to identify potential research topics and pursue them in collaboration with the adult workshop facilitators. At one point during my observations one of the adult facilitators told me, “it’s about the process and not the product” meaning there wasn’t an expectation that youth participating in this workshop cycle necessarily completed an entire research project. The Youth Research Project adult facilitators were more interested in introducing key concepts related to conducting research and providing youth attending the workshops with opportunities to discuss and learn more about the possibilities of research. Inherent in the Research Project workshop design were the connected practices of listening, responding and maintaining flexibility, in regards to both the overall workshop cycle design and during interactions with youth.

The Creative Writing workshop was typically held during the hour before the Youth Research Workshop and Joanna had been working diligently on her novel during that time. When the Youth Researchers Workshop facilitators popped their heads into the seminar room where Joanna and I were working she seemed annoyed by having to stop work on her story. I smiled at Joanna and let her know that the Youth Research facilitators were fun to talk with and suggested that we attend the workshop together.

Joanna and I moved from the seminar workshop room (where the creative writing workshops were held) to the room with the green rolling chairs. Nia, the other youth participant was already there. Joanna sat down in the rolling desk chair next to me and put her head on her arms. The Youth Research workshop always started with everyone seated in a circle sharing his or her highs and lows

from the week. This afternoon was no different and as we went around the circle when it came to Joanna's turn she kept her head down on the desk and did not respond. The workshop facilitator paused for about 5 seconds and said that Joanna could pass for now and gave her own answer. Then, Nia shared her high and lows for the week letting us know that she celebrated her birthday but also broke up with her boyfriend because he cheated on her. Nia stated that even though it was upsetting she was glad they broke up because now she knew his true character. Both adult facilitators expressed they were sorry to hear that Nia and her boyfriend had broken up.

As the highs and lows conversation started to wrap up the topic shifted to Nia's hair because she had gotten a new hairstyle for her birthday. Nia shared that the new hairstyle was helping her feel good about herself. One of the adult facilitators asked the group if they heard about the term self-care. She explained that really self-care was a way people care for themselves. The adult facilitator then asked the group for some examples of self-care. One adult facilitator shared that she wrote in a journal, the other shared that she exercised.

While the adults were sharing examples of self-care, Joanna slowly picked her head up off her hands. She looked at the adult facilitators who were mid-conversation and asked if she could share her highs and lows. The adult facilitator indicated that yes, this was fine. We fell silent as Joanna started to share her highs and lows with the group. She said she was having a lot of lows

right now because she was afraid she was going to be suspended from school. Joanna looked at us and said she felt that no one cared about her. There was a moment of silence in the room, holding space for the gravity of Joanna's statement. I told Joanna that I was sorry to hear her say that but that I understood because I felt that way sometimes too.

The adult facilitator nodded her head and said that for her self-care was anything that helped her stay calm. Joanna nodded her head in agreement. Joanna turned to Nia and asked where she got her hair done. At this point the workshop was about halfway over. The two adult facilitators, Joanna, Nia and myself began talking about the various ways to wash and treat curly hair, since all of us in the group had either curly or very long and thick hair. The conversation continued about various methods we each use, products we recommend and painful or strange things that have happened to us related to our hair, such as people touching it without asking or using too much chemical straightener.

Towards the end of the hour, one adult facilitator turned the other and said they had not done anything they had planned for that day, but it was such a good conversation, that they didn't mind. As we started to clean up the room both of the adult facilitators approached Joanna and thanked her for her contributions during that workshop and said that they hoped to see her the following Wednesday.

Deep listening and responding with care

This vignette brings together a few refrains, the first of which is deep listening and responding with care. As Alexis noted above, as Voices evolved, the practice of developing trust with youth rose to the forefront. The practices of deep listening and responding with care illustrated in the above vignette are important practices in service of developing a trusting relationship with a young person. In this hour-long workshop in December, which essentially consisted of a discussion about practices for hair care, the adults demonstrated the practices of deep listening, in a series of embodied ways. It was shown through how each adult sat, positioned towards the youth. Also through physical gestures, such as nodding their heads while the youth spoke, or making other gestures such as a smile, or moving their hands to indicate "me too" while a youth participated. Responding with care involved sometimes a brief pause, which allowed the adult and/or youth some space to process a comment or statement that was made. It was also in how the adults demonstrated the act of deep listening through their responses. In this way, responding with care was predicated on a posture of deep listening. In the following paragraph I describe how these two practices worked in concert.

First, by allowing Joanna to skip her original turn, the adult facilitator interpreted Joanna's body language (her head on her hands) as a sign that Joanna did not want to participate. The adult acknowledged this (through deep listening) and then responded (with care) by moving along with the activity. Putting her head down on the desk was not framed as Joanna exhibiting a challenging behavior or something that must be corrected. Instead the adults continued to facilitate the workshop. Joanna remained seated in the

circle, the workshop discussion swirled around her. Slowly Joanna chose to participate. Even though her first attempt to participate slightly derailed the conversation, at this point the group had moved from discussing highs and lows to the topic of self-care. Joanna was not reprimanded or turned away. Instead, the adult facilitators welcomed her participation and allowed her to complete the previous discussion activity, sharing her highs and lows. Both adults listened deeply to what Joanna said. The adult facilitator then used Joanna's comment, to return to the conversation about self-care, another example of responding with care. Later in the workshop when the adult facilitators noted the conversation brought them off topic, both expressed contentment with the sustained conversation involving both adult and youth participants. Put another way, some important relational groundwork in service of developing trust was laid during the workshop that was made possible by the practices of deep listening, and responding with care in the moment to Joanna and Nia.

These practices were also present in how the adults deeply listened and responded with care to the highs and lows which Nia shared, offering support when Nia talked about breaking up with her boyfriend. The topic of self-care started because of Nia's comment about getting a new hairstyle that made her feel good about herself. Again, for the purposes of unspooling how the practices of deep listening and responding with care operated in this vignette it was hard to conceive how/if this conversation/discussion would be constructed in the same way in a different location, such as the school classroom, or at home with family. The way the adult facilitators attended to both Nia and Joanna's respective comments and used these as springboards for conversation showed how through listening to youth, adults responded by gearing conversation or

discussion into arenas of interest for the youth. The result was a sustained conversation, which while not solely focused on the topic the adults had intended, was still viewed as a successful moment.

Another example of deep listening and responding with care came from how Alexis described the ways workshop programming was designed at the Voices program over time. As Alexis shared, since the youth at Voices were already mandated to attend the program the adults used this opportunity to develop an afterschool program which was meaningful to the youth. One way to do this was to listen to the youth feedback about workshop programming and respond by using youth feedback to consider which workshops to include or remove. Alexis shared,

> We still have things we bring in that are not successful and it's a matter of really looking at it and not doing it because you heard it was good or you think this might be a good fit.

The easier option might be to schedule programming which the adults "think might be a good fit" for the youth. However, through the practice of deep listening to the youth attending the program, the workshop options and topics could be tweaked and refined. In her discussion of programming and the various workshops and field trips Voices designed and organized, Alexis remarked on the ongoing process of trying out programs and receiving feedback from the youth. She shared,

> So it's really trying to tweak it and not giving up right away because I don't think that's a solution either, like "Ok they don't like it, we're done" [claps hands]. "How can we make this work, what's going to get them here?" Same with the camping trip. Every year [taking on perspective of youth] "I'm not going, there's bears, I don't do tents, I don't do cabins, I don't do bugs. I'm not going, I'm going to hate it. It's the worst experience ever." Mind you they've never done it in their lives so I don't know [where] they're getting that information from. As soon as we get there and they start doing the activities, I already got a bunch of kids, cause they went camping last week, I already got a bunch of them like, " Miss Alexis why did you do [only] one night"?

Here Alexis offers some description about how the adults at Voices listened deeply and responded with care to the youth. Highlighting an orientation towards youth that adults at Voices take which maintained a responsive posture, was predicated on deeply listening to what youth say[1] and viewing their behavior as neither good or bad but instead as a means of communication.

As an example, instead of getting angry about the lack of interest in camping, Alexis designed a trip, which ultimately garnered positive responses from the youth. Similarly, if youth were disinterested in a workshop, it did not mean the workshop was removed. Instead small shifts were made, in response to youth feedback, in an attempt to improve the workshop before removing it all together. These "tweaks" animate another practice tied closely to the practices of deep listening and responding with care, that of flexibility.

Flexibility → limitless possibilities

Similar to deep listening and responding with care, flexibility was present at the programmatic level at Voices as well as in the day-to-day interactions during workshops. This required workshop facilitators to come with planned activities and goals for each session, while maintaining a willingness to shift plans, especially if a youth participant expressed the need for something else in that moment. Alexis shared,

> I always make sure that the [workshop] facilitators had that flexibility. "Ok, yes we want to do a photography workshops but it might not be all photography because these kids might need something else to be included in that." We have to

[1] Anecdotally, in my experience working with young people, there are many adults who view youth as not worthy of being listened to (often due to a perceived lack because of age). I draw out the examples in this section to show the adults who occupied the Voices program space took a very different orientation.

> understand that not every kid is going to be the same. I remember K----- [former workshop facilitator] when she first started her writing workshops again it was the same thing. It was: [assuming perspective of a youth in program] "Oh my god, we just came from school, now you're making us write! Why are you doing this to us?" so I was like "Ok, we hear you, yes that can be very draining" and so we added that creative writing component and they [youth] started creating stories, and comic books, and poetry.

As Alexis mentioned in the above quote, originally the writing workshop was meant to provide youth with opportunities to practice and grow writing skills outside of school. This was connected to Alexis's belief, as the educational director, that some youth attending the Voices program might benefit from additional writing time/practice. Initially, this was not well received by youth attending the program. Youth said it was too much after a full day of school. This was another example of how the practices inform one another. The adults deeply listened to the youth's comments and responded with care to those comments invoking a posture of flexibility. This resulted in shifting the overall workshop topic from writing to *creative* writing. While Alexis referred to this as providing adults "flexibility" there is a more nuanced practice of attaching meaning and value to youth contributions within the Voices program space. When discussing workshop programming Kyle said,

> There are so many options and like limitless possibilities for what they [youth] can do professionally. That's the perspective I come from with programming; [it's] introducing them [youth] to new topics so they [youth] can see what is out there in the world.

This idea of limitless possibilities lends itself to the way flexibility as a practice circulated within the Voices program space. In contrast, many in society view a criminal or legal offense as the end of possibility for a young person. Practices of rigidity and inflexibility are often used with court involved youth (or any young person who has broken the rules). These practices, such as imposed curfews, and/ or curtailing a young

person's ability to move freely about a space take the form of "grounding" a young person, or requiring them to serve an in-school detention.

At the Voices program flexibility was not an inherent trait but a practice of how an adult oriented towards receiving the thoughts and feelings of the youth at the Voices program. This might not have been large-scale flexibility, such as in developing and designing whole workshop cycles. More often the practice of flexibility, or an openness towards these "limitless possibilities" occurred during workshops as the adults and youth interacted with one another. A young person might shift the workshop plan (as illustrated with Nia and Joanna in the vignette about self-care). This in-the-moment flexibility, facilitated by the adult running the workshop, signaled to the young person that their thoughts and ideas were meaningful contributions. It was a practice I observed several times across various workshops during data collection for this study, which helped orient youth towards wide-ranging possibilities for themselves. Hansen, Burdick-Shepherd, Cammarano & Obelleiro (2009) refer to this practice of flexibly orienting oneself towards another person as part of a "cosmopolitan orientation or outlook" which involves a recognition of the "[continuous] sense of self, community and world through the vicissitudes of change" (p. 588). At Voices the adults developed a shared understanding that things change over time and by remaining open to the potential of this change helped youth identify limitless possibilities through engaging with a practice of flexibility.

To further illustrate how adult workshop facilitators flexibly oriented towards youth I share another vignette from a Youth Researcher's workshop in mid-March, which consisted of Nia and another female participant. Unfortunately, Joanna was not present on this day.

During this hour long workshop the group discussed zeroing in on their research project topic. In the months from October – March the adult facilitators made slow but steady movement on developing a youth participatory action research project. Still, due to Nia's inconsistent attendance this was only her 2nd or 3rd time attending the workshop since late December and due to the low numbers of youth currently enrolled in the Voices program, the research project was taking a long time to develop. During this workshop there was a bit of retracing on behalf of the adult facilitators to describe the goal of the workshop and why it was important to choose a potential topic. The following conversation ensued…

Adult Facilitator: *So Nia do you remember the conversation we had last Wednesday? We were talking about identifying a theme or an idea that you guys would want to work more on.*

Nia: *Oh yeah.*

Adult Facilitator 2: *You came up with a few suggestions.*

Nia: *I was about to say, didn't we write some down.*

Adult Facilitator 1: *From our conversation last week I wrote down some of the topics we are interested in. One is police brutality, and then the other one is education and bias in the education system and under that looking at like curriculum and the standards for curriculum. Before we get started, do ya'll remember the subject of the workshop and why we are here talking with ya'll?*

Nia: *Hmmm (shakes head no). I have a really bad memory.*

Adult Facilitator 1: *It's ok. It's kind of confusing sometimes and I want to make sure that we all know why we are doing this project, that might help you choose the topic. The goal of our workshops is a research project that the group will conduct together.*

Nia: *(interrupts her explanation) So did ya'll know each other before this?*

Adult Facilitator 1: *Who, us? No, we are in the same research lab so that is how we know each other.*

Adult Facilitator 2: *We met last year when we started coming here in fact, in October and that's how we met.*

Nia: *Ok, ya'll hang out outside of this. Like ya'll friends?*

Adult Facilitator 1: *We're friends, but Grad school takes a lot of time. It's busy.*

Adult Facilitator 2: *Yeah very busy, like I have class on weekend,s that's how busy.*

Adult Facilitator 1: *(laughs) Yeah exactly. So what do you both think about those topics?*

Nia: *[appearing satisfied that her question was answered] um I think… what are the topics we have?*

Adult Facilitator 1: *We have police brutality, education, and bias in the education system, and curriculum standards.*

At this point the case manager filling in for Melissa (who was out sick that afternoon) brings in food for both Nia and the other youth participant to eat.

Nia: *(starts eating her food) Ya'll have my undivided attention now.*

Adult Facilitator 1: *(laughs) Ohh is that what was going on? You were hungry.*

Nia: *Whatever we talk about I want it to be very interesting so I feel so I'm very engaged.*

Adult Facilitator 1: *So what would engage you?*

Nia: *Food. I'd rather talk about like not like this food [meaning what she is currently eating], I want to talk about food, like real life, like populations with food, you know what I'm trying to say? Maybe we could do like populations among like food places, the McDonalds, Wendy's…*

Part of why I shared this extended bit of transcript is to highlight how part of why the Youth Researcher's Project workshop facilitators worked well at Voices was their willingness to maintain flexible openness towards youth. This practice attached value to youth's contributions; thereby making youth aware of multiple possibilities. The adult facilitators of the Youth Research project consistently demonstrated this orientation. During this workshop Nia asked a fairly divergent question, "how do ya'll know each other?" still she was not redirected or told she was off topic by the adults. Instead the workshop facilitator answered her question directly and then seamlessly brought the conversation back on to the ideas for possible research topics. Here again, the practice of flexibility at Voices was oriented towards responding to youth in fluid ways, which allowed adults to demonstrate that youth's thoughts and ideas were valued. This helped to develop a space where youth were actively engaged and often collaborated with adults, to further explore this practice, I now move to the final refrain, engagement and collaboration.

Engagement → collaboration. During the above vignette Nia stated, "Whatever we talk about I want it to be very interesting so I feel so I'm very engaged." Taking her

statement seriously, the adult facilitator responded, “So what would engage you?” During this workshop the discussion stayed closer to the topic of the workshop, selecting a research topic. Still it was a swirling conversation with several detours, primarily from Nia as she shared her thoughts about the changes happening in her neighborhood. By the end of this workshop, a research topic was not selected, but the group appeared to be moving closer to a project topic focused on how the area around the Voices Center City location shifted over the past several years. Below is an excerpt from later in the same workshop,

> ***Researcher:*** *See though it’s kind of interesting because the Whole Foods wasn’t always there.*
>
> ***Nia:*** *I lived in New York so long that I remember when there used to be nothing but dirt there. Dirt with a gate. [Referring to a piece of land that is now a Whole Foods].*
>
> ***Adult Facilitator 1:*** *So you’ve watched the city change.*
>
> ***Nia:*** *Yes, I definitely did. You know what’s crazy. I kept saying: they need to put a Pink on the Avenue. You know what they did? Put a Pink on the Avenue. And I’m noticing now that, even though it’s like that over there, it might be different. Cause I noticed that they changing it. They trying to make this … I don’t know exactly what…but I know. They are changing it. If you pay attention. If you see what they adding, they are adding stuff. They added Burlington, Marshalls, Olive garden, Starbucks, Pink now, Bath and Body Works, Chipotle. They are making us into something like…I want to say downtown. But it’s going to be like that. It’s*

not going to be looking like the way it used to look. If you go back, let's say five years, the avenue was not like this.

In this moment Nia sounded, to use a cliché, wise beyond her years. While it was difficult to fully locate who Nia was referring to when she said "they,"[2] it appeared that she was referring to the politicians and other city planners who make decisions about which businesses occupy certain locations. Nia was 16 years old when this workshop was recorded and was describing the changes she witnessed in her neighborhood since around the time she was 10 or 11 years old. The discussion that day was highly flexible and moved across a few different topics which engaged Nia and resulted in her making several salient points, in regards to her observations of her neighborhood. Nia stated she wanted to be engaged and the adult facilitators engaged her in a conversation where Nia collaborated, through ongoing discussion, about the selection of a possible research topic.

Again, I wondered: how might this type of discussion fare in another setting (e.g., public school or home)? Within this Voices workshop, the practice(s) of deeply listening to a young person and then responding with care all while flexibly orienting oneself towards youth as a way to attach value and meaning to their contributions fostered practices of engagement and collaboration. Together these practices culminated in a rich textured melody that was a trusting relationship with a young person. Part of how these practices flourished within the Voices workshops was related to how the adults at Voices

[2] This was unfortunately the last time I saw Nia. I planned to conduct a follow up interview with her and inquire about her comments during this workshop but it was in the last month of my data collection and on subsequent occasions, when I visited the Voices program, Melissa let me know that Nia had not been attending.

worked to cultivate the conditions for these refrains to be heard. Part of this requires that we time travel back to when the Voices program was established.

Creating the conditions for developing trust with youth. Early in the Voices program history, primarily after the OCFS funding was secured, Alexis and her team realized the resulting shift in population of youth attending the program were harder to engage. Since many youth refused to attend Voices even though it was mandated, the first step was getting youth in the door. This caused the adults at Voices to think creatively about ways to invite and encourage youth to attend the program. The Voices staff began visiting local parks, stores and basketball courts to meet youth participants in places that youth inhabited. The adults at Voices used these visits to literally meet youth where there were (physically) and learn more about the youth in order to identify youth interests to extend the invitation to attend the program. As the Voices program staff extended their reach an understanding developed in terms of how the program was positioned for the youth. Alexis shared,

> We were like the monsters of the courthouse [laughs]. So even when they [youth] did come, they weren't coming willingly, they weren't coming excited. And of course we don't expect that because the situation, we don't expect anybody to be excited about court-mandated programs. But we wanted them to get something out of it because when we started seeing the improvement in the engagement, we started seeing the change in their attitude when they were coming everyday. It wasn't like "ughh I have to be here." So it's not just: "Ok, you're gonna come here, you're gonna do this." They're [youth] already being forced to do all this stuff. Why not have something where they can at least have a say in what they're going to do? That's when we really started including them [youth] to decide what they want.

This decision to involve youth in the collaborative planning was a turning point for the Voices program. It implied that the adults at Voices trusted the youth attending the program to provide meaningful feedback about the various workshops and enrichment

activities. Finding ways to connect with youth and show the youth their opinions mattered was an important collaborative practice enacted within the Voices program. As Alexis stated, “We don’t expect anybody to be excited about court-mandated programs. But we wanted them to get something out of it.” An important aspect of setting the conditions to establish a trusting relationship with youth at Voices was attempting to understand the perspective of the youth when they entered the program, and how they might feel within that space. As Greene (2013) famously wrote, “social imagination is the capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficit society” (p. 5). Part of creating the conditions for a trusting relationship with youth required that the adults at Voices consistently drew upon their own knowledge of the systems within which the youth at Voices were subsumed. The adults did this to help youth understand that receiving a legal consequence and participation in the Voices program was a beginning, an opening to limitless possibilities, not a closing off or ending. This relates to the conditions, which the adults and youth created through their interactions with one another within the Voices program space. Pahl (2012) citing Massey (2005) states, “Massey’s work begins to address the ‘combination of order and chance, intrinsic to space’” (Massey, 2005, p. 151), which makes children’s lives within uncertain spaces contingent on forces they have no control over” (p. 204). These examples show how the adults at Voices both produced a space (created conditions) to develop trusting relationships with youth but were simultaneously produced *by* the Voices program space, through participating in moments (interactions) with where adults relinquished some of their control.

"Energy" of a space. Alexis shared this commitment: to create a physical space at all Voices locations, which was inviting and geared towards an openness which supported youth attending and engaging with the program. She said,

> I'm really big on that one. When I walk into a place and I'm just like [sighs] "I don't know if I like this place," [laughs]. They [youth] do it too and also allowing them to have, because these younger kids need that freedom to be able to design their own space.

Here Alexis acknowledges that an uncomfortable space was something that potentially deterred a youth from attending the program. The practice of attending to the "energy" of a space was related to refrains of engagement and collaboration as this attention to how a space feels helped to consider how that may or may not impact a young person's willingness to engage. Developing a welcoming space was also a way to build trusting relationships with youth. Alexis described ways that youth were invited to co-create a space.

> We want to have color; we want to have pictures up. We want to have their art and crafts stuff hanging from the ceiling. We want to be able for them to feel that they have freedom to hang stuff up, and sometimes write on the wall, which is why we got the dry erase walls.

This practice of decorating/designing a space, which showcased youth art (broadly defined) fostered a feeling of youth ownership of the space which Voices staff noticed improved youth attendance and engagement in the program.

There was more flexibility for this transformation of space at the North Voices location because of how it was designed. At the Center City Voices, the "youth side" space was shared with programs for older youth, 16-18. As an example, as a workshop "classroom", the room where the Youth Research Project workshop typically met, had a dry-erase wall where youth attending Voices were encouraged to write, and draw during

program hours. Yet the dry erase wall was almost always covered with notes/writing by the alternative school program, which was held in the same space during the hours of 8am-3pm. This showed there was less flexibility for the adults and youth at the Center City Voices to co-create a sustainable welcoming space. Part of the emphasis brought by the adults at Voices on creating a welcome space was it helped to re-frame the action of being mandated to attend the program. As Alexis shared, this emphasis on the value added through youth participating and attending workshops was paramount. This began with an orientation (or way of thinking) towards youth, which was based on their capacity and not their deficits (Simplican, 2015) and connected with the "cosmopolitan orientation" (Hansen et al., 2009), which allowed adults to draw upon their understandings of the histories present in the space shared with youth during workshop facilitation. This final data refrain for this chapter shows how each shared practice (deep listening and responding with care; flexibly orienting towards youth; engagement/collaboration and creating the conditions) leads to (or was supported by) an orientation based on capacity towards both adults and youth within the Voices space. Related to setting the conditions of a space there was a way of thinking about, and being with youth that inherently valued their contributions, socio-spatial locations and lived histories.

Capacity orientation(s): A Practice Rooted in "Meeting youth where they are"

One afternoon towards the end of the data collection period for this dissertation, I arrived at the Center City Voices location to find the cubicle empty. Another Journey's

employee let me know that Melissa was out sick but Kyle was in her office. I noticed a few of the youth participants in the third workshop room, with the dry erase wall. I popped my head in and said hello to Joanna. She smiled and asked if we could continue our writing project. I told her yes, and that I would be right back. I went to the back wall, where the closed offices are located. Kyle's office door was closed but she saw me through the small glass window and waved me in. As I entered the office I realized there was a young woman sitting on the floor. Kyle was seated adjacent to the woman, leaning over from her office chair. Kyle introduced me and said I was an adult who came a few times a week to learn about youth's experiences in the Voices program. Kyle let me know it was the woman's first day at Voices. I greeted her warmly and said I was going to begin writing with Joanna if she wanted to join us.

This was another example of how Voices staff interacted with youth. The young woman was participating in the intake process and wanted to sit on the floor. Instead of redirecting her to sit in a chair, Kyle allowed her to sit on the floor, a place where the youth, at that moment, perhaps felt the most comfortable. During our interview Kyle shared,

> I'm coming from an open-ended perspective, as well, I'm not the expert. I am the student. I am not the teacher in these youth's lives. I do not know anything about their experiences. I will never understand, I can only strive and try to understand and try to empathize as much as I can but I take the role of a learner.

This way of thinking shared by Kyle oriented towards being *with* the youth, learning with and from them was oriented towards identifying and support the assets or capabilities of youth arriving at the Voices program. This was predicated on an orientation which the adults working at Voices employed to "meet youth where they are" sometimes quite literally when the adult Voices staff members entered the community spaces youth

inhabited to invite them to attend the program. It also took shape in how adults deeply listened and responded with care, not chastising a young person (as with Joanna putting her head down, or Nia constantly asking off topic questions) but using interactions to identify youth's assets and build trusting relationships in service of supporting the youth while they attended the program. Alexis shared,

> We have to understand that not every kid is going to be the same. And we have to give them that opportunity to show us that they know what they [youth] want and that it's a good…[laughs]. We have kids all the time [who say], "I wanna work, I wanna improve school and this is what I need to do" and they tell us what they are gonna do. We're like "Ok! Let's do it" and that's what they need. So it's trying to tweak it and not just giving up right away because I don't think that's a solution either.

In her description Alexis offered two different approaches (or orientations) for working with court-involved youth. One is "Give up right away" which she expressed, was not a viable approach for the adults at Voices. She noted that some youth attending the program immediately understand their mistakes, accepted the consequences (being mandated to attend the Voices program) and worked towards improving their situation. This group of young people was perhaps the easiest to collaborate with and engage. For other youth it was not as easy. Alexis shared,

> You have to understand that these kids are not gonna come happy and we can't take it personal. I didn't feel offended [if a youth] doesn't want to be here and I'm not gonna throw it in [their] face if [they] decide to come back and want be here. If [they return], "Ok come on, perfect, we love to have you come back. Let's sit down and let's figure this out."

This orientation is based on an approach, which presumed the competence of youth attending the program as a baseline. Beyond this, youth were trusted to make decisions (within reason) of their own volition. Melissa used somewhat similar language to describe how she supported youth in the program. Melissa said,

> I don't approach each youth the same. Every youth has gone through different things in their lives, so I do approach them differently, the only [similar] thing I do with all youth is approach them in a way that's non-judgmental. [I] make them feel like they can speak to me about anything that is going on and try to open up a good relationship and let them feel comfortable and let them trust me.

Kyle built upon this in her discussion of developing relationships with youth, often in moments when youth were either in crisis or recently experienced a crisis. She shared,

> That's where we [Voices] try to start. When you're not accepting where a youth is at that's why it's so easy to lead into: "Well I know what's best for you and it's this." [sighs] I see that at probation, that is everywhere and I don't know because that's just like our societal way of doing things. But we [adults] don't know what's best, so, being a learner and saying [to a young person]: "What are the–, you tell me, what are the barriers?" It's not on me to make an assumption and to try to tweak your behavior because of that assumption, so that's something that I see a lot. It's a lot of, in all of the spaces, I mean except for Voices, when we think about school, home, court, it's really a lot of not accepting the youth where they're at.

Meeting youth where they are and valuing the lived experiences youth carried into the program, made attending to youth's ongoing participation, through practices of deep listening and responding with care, flexibility towards limitless possibilities, collaboration and engagement more meaningful and sustained ways of interacting with youth. Kyle elaborated on other approaches adults may take with court-involved youth, such as assuming they (the adult) knows what was best for the young person. The practices enacted by the adults at Voices offer a counterpoint to this approach; they trusted youth to describe what they might need, tacitly positioning them as experts in their own lives. From this standpoint, it became more likely for a young person attending the Voices program to understand the types of support available to them to prevent further court involvement. Alexis shared that this capacity orientation remained fairly

radical when taken up towards court involved youth.[3] Kyle confirmed this when she compared the capacity orientation Voices staff members used to the one she viewed more commonly, in other spaces, such as court or school saying "that's just like our societal way of doing things." Adults telling youth "what to do" is a dominant cultural narrative, common in the U.S., as in many other areas. As the adult and youth interactions at the Voices program show, when an approach or orientation based on capacity is employed, the interactions between adults and youth shift from expert → novice to a fluid understanding that all people possess capabilities and capacities and all people have room to grow, learn and flourish from each other.

Concluding Thoughts

In this chapter I attempted to separate out several refrains related to the descriptions of physical space and practices at the Voices ATDP, which often occurred simultaneously in layered and messy ways. None of these refrains occurs alone but instead as part of a larger composition, which involves many contrapuntal refrains. All drawing from the opening refrain of this chapter, which shared how Nia and Joanna described the Voices program, as both a place for bad kids (Nia) and a place where "I could be myself" (Joanna).

In order to describe them more explicitly I attempted to separate out the refrains of deeply listening and responding with care to youth in flexible ways, which fostered engagement and collaboration within the Voices program. These practices were taken up by the adults at Voices during their interactions with youth as a way to build trusting

[3] I argue this applies to youth in general and I return to this constant push/pull of adult/youth interactions.

relationships. This was greatly aided by creating the conditions, which valued and supported these ways of being with youth. This was perhaps the most lasting feature of the Voices program space, adults took seriously their interactions with youth and worked to approach youth from a capacity orientation. Spending time in the Voices program space allowed me, as the researcher, to consider a restricted educational program, outside of the formal schooling space. Considering the moves that were made as the program established itself, I wondered: What worked at Voices and how was the space created and maintained by the adults and youth through their interactions during at the program? There was a connection between how the Voices program space was developed and the orientation the adults enacted in the space allowing for the discussed practices. I now leave the Voices program and enter another restricted educational program, one that inhabits a formal schooling space to describe the physical attributes and practices of the Saturn school. My hope is to tease out the possible linkages between the two restricted educational programs slowly winding its way towards greater interpretation (in Chapter VI) of the term “restrictive” and its connection to inclusive education and spatial (in) justice.

Chapter V

THE SATURN SCHOOL

Exposition Two

Introducing the Saturn 12th graders

I first met Paul, Ullrich, Tanya and Brian during their Economics class with Mr. Harpin. It was late January and Tanya's first day back at school after missing several weeks as she recovered from a recent surgery. During that first observation Mr. Harpin welcomed her back and asked how she was feeling. A few meaningful moments at the beginning of the class involved Tanya talking about her recovery and how she was excited to get back to school. Mr. Harpin's willingness to cede the floor to Tanya and provide her space to discuss her surgery initially struck me as something unique about the Saturn School. The interactions between adults and youth moved in and outside of the academic sphere fairly often; this appeared connected to the fact that many, if not all, of the youth attending the Saturn school were labeled with physical or multiple disabilities. For many of the youth attending the school ongoing medical care (or treatment) through out the school day was a necessity. During our interview Ullrich told me,

> [One] summer I actually ended up having surgery and I missed over a quarter of the [following] school year. If I was in public school I would immediately have fell back and been behind. This school is the best when it comes to health. They're kids here who might have multiple surgeries in a year and the teachers and the staff work really well with trying to get them back into the classes slowly.

I first met Nathan, Sapphire, Ron and Mark during Mr. Cross's 5th period English class. During one of my initial observations at the start of February, the class was reading

excerpts from the book, *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone. From my initial time spent participating and observing in Mr. Cross's class I noted how Sapphire, Ron, Mark and Nathan used different modes of communication. Mr. Cross appeared to value these modes as meaningful participation in his class.

Across these early months of data collection I realized that all youth participating in the study, except for Mark, attended Ms. Roger's Media Arts class split across two periods. In fact, across the school day, Paul, Ullrich, Tanya and sometimes Brian were enrolled in a similar schedule of classes. While Ron, Sapphire, Nathan and sometimes Mark followed a similar schedule. Both Brian and Mark required the most medical support throughout their school day and I noticed they often spent large chunks of time in the school's Medical department. At Saturn, the high school was departmentalized, based on how youth were assessed.[1] This was how the homeroom class was organized and how the student schedules were generated, from the school wide Master schedule.[2] Youth at Saturn did not spend the entire school day in the same classroom with the same teacher but instead traveled through the school day with similar groups of students attending classes with different teachers.

When I asked youth participants to describe the Saturn school many noted the small class sizes, and opportunities to attend related service provision in the same physical school building as the most positive aspects of Saturn. Ullrich shared,

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[1] In the state where the Saturn school is located alternative assessment is the term used to refer to state testing, which is specifically design for "students with the most significant cognitive disabilities…which align with alternate academic achievement standards." There is a cap placed on what percentage of students may participate in alternate assessment, which may not exceed 1.0 percent and is meant to mirror the percentage of the United States population, which is labeled as "significantly cognitively disabled" (http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/nysaa/2019-20/9-policy-brief-19.pdf).

[2] This refers to the school wide schedule from which all student schedules were generated.

> I feel like here at [Saturn] learning is more individualized. For some students they feel the need to speed up the pace so classes can be split so that they feel like they're going at the [right] pace that they need. For other students they might not understand certain topics, so they can go over it with the teacher individually. I feel like having a relationship with teachers and building relationships is much easier here than it is at any other public school because of that.

Paul and Tanya both noted how Saturn was less stigmatizing than other places they might occupy. Paul shared,

> Well for instance, going to a restaurant and ordering. The waiter comes over to the table and instead of asking me what I want to eat, they ask the person next to me. As opposed to here [Saturn] where I go to the cafeteria, they ask me.

Building on this overall attitude at Saturn Tanya shared,

> Here [at Saturn] it's like my wheelchair doesn't exist, [I'm] a person talking, whereas if I were to go to another school, [people] stare, [they think], "don't talk to that person". [And] for people that do come up, kudos to them, cause not a lot of people do that.

Ron, who enrolled at Saturn during middle school, shared that at first he was hesitant because of his previous experiences at a public elementary school program for youth with multiple disabilities. He shared,

> [When I first arrived at Saturn] I didn't want to talk to anybody cause I didn't know any of the teachers, any of the kids. Then once I got a little bit bigger a lot changed. I got to know some of the teachers and some of the kids that came here. Now I talk to everybody! I wanted to [talk] cause I knew everything was gonna be ok, but I knew I had that experience at my old school cause; a lot of people wasn't very nice [there].

Public school was almost always the referent for youth as they described, or sometimes attempted to justify the daily practices of the Saturn school. This consistent use of public school as the comparison (by youth and adults in this study) was understandable since most of the youth participants in this study shared stories from their lived experiences

attending or being turned away from their local public school.[3] These stories included descriptions of physical inaccessibility, exclusion/isolation, bullying and the conflation of physical impairment/medical condition with intellectual capability. In their descriptions youth often positioned Saturn as a less harmful alternative. Brian, who enrolled at Saturn during early elementary school, shared that at his previous school he was forced to eat in a room by himself and once left upstairs during a fire drill because no one wanted to transport him down the stairs. Discussing Saturn Brian shared,

> I definitely changed from when I got here, you can ask all the old teachers. They would tell you I would not say a word, [I was] very shy. Then out of nowhere as I grew up I couldn't stop talking [now] they say I have verbal diarrhea.

Brian described the staff (adults) working at Saturn as caring and always offering to help. As Sapphire, who enrolled at the Saturn school in 8th grade, explained,

> I'm happy to be in a private school now cause it [is] much nicer people here than in the public school. Everybody there [public school] was not that nice. When I came [to the Saturn school] they [adult staff] said they [were] waiting for me. They were so happy that I was there and on my first day everyone kind of [tried] to help me settle in.

Nathan who used eye gaze technology as an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) support, described Saturn as, "home, another home. Home because kids with disabilities can go to school, learn, play, [and] talk with friends." Mark, who used similar AAC technology as Nathan, told me that Saturn was "an exciting, good, wonderful place because of gym and the pool."

Something I always kept in mind was a comment Tanya made during our interview when I asked how she described the Saturn school to people. Without missing a

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[3] Except for Nathan who immigrated to the United States from Russia with his family when he was 9 years old and shared that he did not attend public school and instead received home instruction for two years until he was offered acceptance to attend the Saturn school at the age of 11.

beat she replied, “Honestly, I really don’t talk about [it] that much. I mean we don’t bring up school, we’re teenagers, no one really does.” This signaled to me, that school, is almost always at times an oppressive space for young people, regardless of their status of receiving a label. Traditionally, schooling spaces are created and maintained by adults and while the Saturn School was an alternative independent school it mirrored many traditional spatial aspects of schooling. Tanya’s comment brought forth an important consideration that while young people here in the United States spend large portions of their childhoods in schooling spaces it is often without their full assent. Why discuss a space that pays little regard to your lived experiences and input?

When I asked youth to share the challenges of attending the Saturn school, academics and related activities were identified by most youth. Paul was the first to broach the conversation of academics telling me how he, Tanya and Ullrich considered leaving the Saturn school at the end of their 8th grade year. Paul said,

> We [Tanya, Ullrich and himself] usually talk about the curriculum [at Saturn and how] we think we could have done a little bit more. Obviously it’s a smaller school because there aren’t as many disabled people as there are abled-bodied people, so the school gets less funding. They don’t have the best—they don’t have the top classes.

Ullrich shared his reasoning for wanting to leave the Saturn school at the end of middle school,

> I felt like I was behind, in comparison to like my brother and my sister. They both were in honors and advanced classes. This school [Saturn] normally [did] Algebra for two years and [didn’t] start at 8th grade. We were pushing for it for a while, not just my parents, but other students [and their] parents in my class. Cause we felt we were capable of doing it. We sort of made the school acclimate to us. I think they also hired new staff and new teachers that I feel have really changed the school in a good way.

Adding to Paul and Ullrich’s observations Tanya shared,

> We don't have as much available to us academically as regular public school; like other public schools have other electives like psych or chemistry and stuff like that. We're not able to receive that here because only a certain handful of kids are actually, I don't want to say intelligent enough, but like capable of taking a class and maintain the information while not like making the grades drop drastically.

Paul, Ullrich and Tanya couched their description of academics in the types of students who attended the Saturn school as part of the reasoning for why the focus on academics was not as strong as each youth preferred. As a person who does not identify as disabled I do not feel I am prepared to offer analysis about the possibility of internalized ableism in some of their statements.[4] I do think it shows how a space was produced at the Saturn School, which sorted and classified youth based on their disability label and capabilities. This organization, which was likely set in place by the adults occupying the Saturn School space, was taken up and re-inscribed by some of the youth attending the school. Tanya went on to say,

> I mean I think it's great for the other kids because they have somewhere to go, instead of like being home or being put in a regular public school and not doing anything or not being able to benefit in anyway.

This comment from Tanya highlights the complication of how ideas related to ability moved through the Saturn school space, interweaving with both youth *and* adults. Tanya who shared that outside of the Saturn School people are less likely to approach her because of her mobility aid positioned herself as different from the youth attending Saturn who required more support.

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[4] When I use the phrase internalized ableism I am referring to the process by which a person who identifies as disabled makes a comment or action which relies on the nondisabled body as the reference point. Tanya, a wheelchair user, herself turned away from her local public school positions herself as different (based on her capabilities) from the youth who require more medical, social/emotional or academic support.

Still, some of the "other kids" commented on academics at Saturn as well. Brian shared his concerns about academics. He noted,

> We should be writing a lot more, like the most that I've written is probably three pages—that's like nothing. In college you're writing thirty plus pages and I don't think they're on college-level writing yet. I would say that in general it's not as rigorous as it seems.

Sapphire added a question about the activities and other programs offered by the school. She shared,

> I would like [there] to be more activities here because there's not much activity. It's like the only activity is like dancing. This year has been good because we went on a lot of trips. Every time they give us a permission slip, I sign it right away because I want to get out of the building. [During class I'm] bored listening to all these [adults] because it's a lot of stuff I already learned. I feel like I heard all this stuff before [referring to classroom instruction].

When I asked Ron about any changes he would like to see at the Saturn school, he told me,

> I was going to say [change the rules] a little bit, I know you can't change certain rules. [So instead of changing the rules], get all brand new computers with touch screens. For everybody, not just for some, [and] for every classroom a more [up dated] Smart board.

As I listened to these proposed changes or identified challenges from the youth participants, I noted a pattern that for the youth participants planning to attend college, (Tanya, Paul, Brian and Ullrich), feeling prepared to move on to a new educational setting was paramount. Of these four, Tanya, Paul and Ullrich often positioned themselves as needing more of an academic challenge than their peers. This suggested deficit orientations towards the young people attending Saturn who benefitted from academic supports. Ron and Sapphire, who fell into the group of youth Paul, Ullrich and Tanya interacted with but also positioned themselves away from focused more on the non-academic aspects of the Saturn school, such as activities, school rules and

technology. Though Sapphire did share that she felt most of the academic material in her classes were things she previously learned.

Mark and Nathan, both of whom used AAC supports offered no challenges or suggested changes to the Saturn School. I do not think this is because there were no challenges or changes wanted from either young man. Both Mark and Nathan relied heavily on their Speech and Language therapists for consistent access and use with their eye gaze technology. Though I observed Mark and Nathan using their AAC supports in other settings (e.g., classroom and cafeteria) both supports were used with more intention and consistency during Speech and Language related service delivery. This meant I conducted interviews with Mark and Nathan with their respective related service provider present in the room, which may have limited their replies.

Across my time at Saturn I became more aware of these types of internal dynamics, often involving some type of deficit orientation (from youth to youth or adult to youth). During our interview Tanya told a story, which addressed the role of communication at the Saturn school, and how this related to possible academic and social hierarchies. Tanya shared,

> I am friends with another student here, he's in the same grade as me but just different classes. He's non-verbal.[5] I've known him for, I want to say 10 years, and I can understand him, with a snap of my fingers. He's not able to verbally communicate, he uses his eyes or his dynavox and a lot of people ask me: "Oh how you do you do that?" And it takes time and practice. So a lot of time, there's a kid who's non verbal in the hallway who needs help, I take my time I try to understand them, if I don't know, then I ask someone who does know so the next time I'll be able to help them.

During our conversation Tanya shared with me that she is planning to study speech and language pathology in college. She expressed an awareness of how communication and

[5] She is referring to Mark.

access to communication influences how youth at the Saturn school were perceived or treated. Tanya said,

> Sometimes it does happen here, like some adults treat kids who are nonverbal a little more childish. Like some kids that are here, nonverbal and they're a little more mentally delayed, so I understand that there's other kids who are here and sometimes they get pet or they're talked to like a toddler. [I wonder] if you've been working at the school this long, why are you still doing that?

A similar refrain came out of a short conversation I had with Sapphire towards the end of my data collection at Saturn. I asked her how she would like people at Saturn to think of her. She replied,

> I want them [adults] to think of me as an adventurous lady and someone who is always really ready to learn something new. Someone who [is] doing a lot of work. Someone who probably might be famous or might have a lot of fun doing what she's doing. That's what I want them to think.
> **Researcher:** And do you feel like people here at [school] think those things about you?
> **Sapphire:** Yes and no. Sometimes they [adults] say: "You're famous!" and they take a lot of photographs of me. They say: "You're gorgeous, pretty, I like your hair!" Sometimes I don't think [that's true].

Spending time with youth both, observing interactions and then, across our interviews and informal conversations a "cover story" (Crites, 1979 as cited in Craig, 2003) of the Saturn school developed. This cover story focused on the positive aspects of the Saturn school, the small class sizes, access to an array of related service provision and the family-like atmosphere of the interactions between adults and youth. These positive aspects of the Saturn School offered a schooling space unlike most public schools in the regional area, in terms of services provided to youth classified with a disability. When asked to describe their lived experience at the Saturn School, some youth participants surfaced deficit assumptions which wrestled with other conceptions of ability as they circulated the school related to curricular opportunities and how youth were interacted

with and supported. My attention was again drawn to this hierarchy related to various conceptions of ability during my interview with Ron. He shared,

> I would like to talk to somebody who is younger. I'm getting older. I would like to talk to somebody that's young and that's going to come to school for the very first time but I haven't talked to anybody yet.

At first I took Ron's comment as meaning he had not identified a young person to educate about the Saturn School. The longer I spent at Saturn the more I realized Ron was referring to his lack of participation in the Saturn Outreach program.[6] During the recruitment phase for this dissertation study Ron told me excitedly, "I've been waiting for someone to come and talk with me."

This was further complicated in the ways the Saturn School cover story was often used to seek out funding (and other) opportunities. This responsibility, to reaffirm the cover story of the Saturn school, often seemed to fall to the youth attending the school to help display Saturn's role in the local community and society at large. Tanya shared,

> Funding's always an issue for any school honestly but over the years it's a lot more: "Hey, look at these kids, we're disabled give us money". I mean I get we have to do what we have to do to keep things running and keep things smooth so that more kids can go here but sometimes it's a little overkill.

While the Saturn school was fairly diverse in terms of race and socio-economic status. I noted that Tanya, Paul and Brian each identified as white. Tanya was Latinx but told me she identified as white. Ullrich was an Israeli national, born and raised a few towns over from where the Saturn school was located. Sapphire, and Ron were both Black, Nathan

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[6] The Saturn outreach program was a club created by a former graduate of Saturn who still worked at the school. Young people who were invited to participate in this club went around to local schools sharing their experience as a person with a disability to educate others about the lived experience of people with disabilities. As Brian described it to me, "We speak about our disability, and life in general but it's really just education for all the kids. I tell these kids how I use the bathroom, how I get into my bed, and they don't really know anything about it. And their eyes just open up from "These kids are useless" but once they hear our stories, they're: 'Wow! They actually have a lot of potential.'"

was Russian born and immigrated to the United States when he was nine years old. Mark, similar to Tanya, presented as white but had Latinx heritage. I share these identity descriptions, after confirming them with the youth participants, to highlight how policies, which enact racism and ableism are often rendered invisible or normalized (Annamma, Connor & Ferri, 2016). These systems were imbricated within the schooling space of Saturn.

When Tanya described the ways disabled youth were used as funding opportunities or to display the school, it was primarily the white disabled youth who participated in this type of activity. As a Black youth, Ron's comment, "I've been waiting for someone to come and talk with me" surfaced how youth at Saturn were positioned based on their perceived capabilities and other identity factors, such as race. Ron and Sapphire were rarely featured in promotional materials, which I noticed Tanya, Brian and Paul occupied quite frequently. This became another way of considering who was valued and supported at the Saturn school. Some students were tapped consistently to participate in this sort of consciousness raising about the school and its population of students and some were not.

Spending time with the 12th grade participants for this dissertation research study I came to understand in a broader sense how the spaces which are produced and labeled schools are deeply entrenched with circulating conceptions of ability, and often tinged with deficit thinking across several identity categories, including race and other societal factors (such as, class). To unsettle these deeply rooted spatial productions seemed insurmountable from within and around a school space. Simultaneously, and offering a

major complication, part of what made Saturn liberatory for youth participants was simultaneously limiting. As Tanya put it,

> I can't say this is a legitimate statement because I haven't been to another public school long enough to experience this, but it's hard to be socially prepared for moving on to college and stuff in a school like this, 'cause it's very closed off. You're in a very tight knit community. I think we're missing a really huge gap in the social piece.

This opening exposition focusing on the youth data shows the value of a tight knit group but also the dangers of receiving an education that was highly isolated. From the words and interactions with the youth participants in this study I began to wonder about the space of schools and spatial productions of school; noting that the lived experience of school for all young people is a lived experience that may offer support and growth but ultimately for some, offer more constraint than possibility.

I now move to a physical and historical description of the Saturn school to provide more context for the day-to-day routines and practices. Spending time with the youth participants for this study I came to understand the Saturn school as a unique and complicated space; one that primarily met (or exceeded) the physical accessibility requirements of youth but seemed to continually emphasize or re-articulate deficit informed perceptions of ability.

Development Two: The Description and Practices of the Saturn School

The Saturn School was founded in 1962 as an extension of the Saturnalia Center, which was established in 1958 to support local physically disabled adults seeking employment after World War II. The founder of Saturnalia Center was aware of the stigma faced by physically disabled people, many of whom were capable of meaningful participation in the workforce, but faced barriers due to inaccessible work places and the conflation of physical disability with intellectual limitations (Charlton, 1998; Dudley-Marling Gurn, 2010). The founder identified as a physically disabled person and possessed lived experienced tied to this stigma. Therefore, he established the Saturnalia Center to offer alternatives in employment for physically disabled people, including vocational training. The Saturn School was opened in response to a similar phenomena identified by the founder of the Saturnalia Center. He recognized that local area children with physical disabilities were similarly stigmatized due to their impairments but instead of exclusion from the workforce, it was their local public schools.

In this chapter I develop the refrains from Exposition Two, which began Chapter V of this dissertation. The first refrain I offer is a physical description of the Saturn School, focusing primarily on the high school where I spent most of my time while collecting data. I then offer a short refrain, which includes the history of the Saturn School ending with how the school is organized today. This is derived primarily from ethnographic field notes and adult interview data. Finally, I share three refrains from across the dissertation data focused on the daily routines of the Saturn School, which are

organized around the practices of time, independence/interdependence, co-production and limited curricular patching.

Physical Description of the Space

The Saturn School is located about 20 miles from downtown Center City. The school itself is located in a suburban town that features large tree lined roads, strip malls with commercial properties, residential houses and green spaces. As you approach the school it is set back from the main thoroughfare surrounded by a large parking lot. The school building, which is shared with the Saturnalia Center, sits on a large parcel of land located between two major roadways in the town. There are multiple entrances to the building but only one official school entrance that is used during the school day. While the Center and School are connected, i.e., they physically share the same building, during the school day a series of closed swinging doors maintains a barrier between the two spaces. When distinguishing between the School and the Center, adult research participants referred to the Center as the "adult side" and youth referred to it as "the Center".

The Saturn School entrance is a low-slung box-shaped entryway with an automatic door adjacent to one of the large parking lots. As you enter the building there is a second automatic door, which remains locked during school hours. Upon entering the building there are two desks on the right and left hand side. The desk on the right hand side is where the school's head of security sits. The head of security is the first person to greet people upon entering the school. He dresses in business casual clothing and greets students and teachers as they move past his desk. In order to access and move around the

school as a visitor, photo identification must be presented. All visitors receive a badge that the head of security gently reminds guests to keep visible while moving about the building.

The overall architecture design of the Saturn School has a distinct style associated with buildings of the late 1960s and 70s. The outside façade consists of darkish red brick adorned with plexiglass windows. The brick/plexiglass combination composes most of the exterior building and some interior hallway. The building is one story and therefore takes up a large square footage land area consisting of multiple hallways where the various programs (Pre-K, Elementary, Middle and High school) are located. The opening foyer is covered with a periwinkle blue carpet that opens to tiled floors towards the back, overlooking an interior courtyard. The hallways are wide and lined with classrooms or walls with wide plexiglass windows, which look out onto interior courtyards and/or the parking lots surrounding the schools.

Figure 6: Main lobby of the Saturn School looking towards High School wing.

The main entrance of the school acts as a hinge between the two main wings of the elementary/middle school (Pre-K-8) and high school (9-12) programs. To the left of main entrance lobby (pictured above) is the high school hallway. To the right is another long hallway, which leads to the auditorium and cafeteria. The elementary and middle school programs are located to the right of this hallway. For the most part, the elementary and middle school students stay in their respective wings and vice versa with the high school students. There are some areas at Saturn, which are shared by all youth (and adults) such as: the cafeteria, auditorium, elective classrooms, medical department, pool and related service provision offices.

Figure 7: Saturn School cafeteria

Figure 8: Hallway between high school and related services wing.

Most of the data collection for this dissertation study took place either in the high school wing or the Media Literacy classroom, which was located in another part of the school on the other side of the middle and elementary school hallways past the speech therapy offices. I provide a bit more visual and textual description of the physical classroom spaces in the following section.

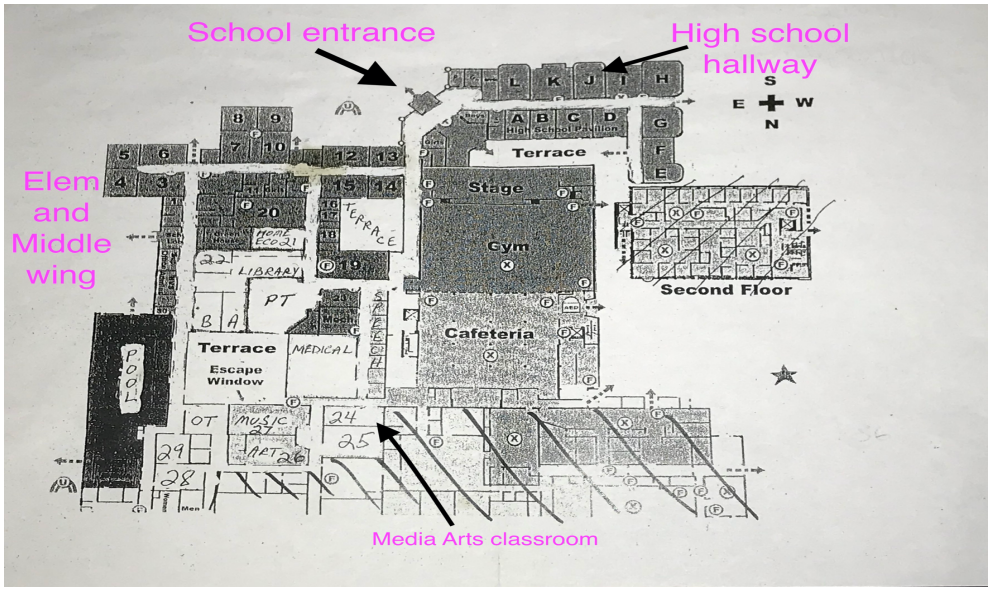

Figure 9: Map of the Saturn School provided by head of security on my first visit.

Description of the classroom spaces. The high school hallway is L-shaped and lined on both sides with content area classrooms such as English, Science, Math, Spanish and Social Studies. The Assistant Head of School's office is at the top of the hallway closest to the main entrance. The high school wing is located the furthest away from the Saturnalia Center and rest of the Saturn School. This means that leaving the high school hallway requires passing by the Main school entrance and security desk. During the school day there were often students hanging out by the head of security's desk chatting with him. There was also a group of young adults (from the Saturnalia Center post-high school program) who sold snacks and candy after 10 a.m. at a table located in the foyer across from security desk. The main entrance was a thoroughfare of the school and especially during passing period, students in grades 9-12 and adults moved between the high school hallway and rest of the school.

A majority of this study was spent observing and participating in three classrooms at the Saturn School: the English classroom, Economics (social studies) classroom, and Media Arts classroom. Two of the classrooms were located in the high school wing, those of Mr. Cross, the English teacher, and Mr. Harpin, the social studies teacher. The Media Arts classroom with Ms. Rogers was located on the opposite side of the school between the Speech and Language Therapy offices and other arts classrooms. Ample time was also spent in the hallways, cafeteria, auditorium and volunteer office.

In terms of their overall shape and existing furniture, Mr. Cross and Mr. Harpin's rooms were nearly identical. The same painted white cinderblocks lined three walls with an exterior wall of plexiglass windows facing the parking lot. Both classrooms have a teacher's desk pushed up against the front wall of the room, next to the Smart board.

Neither Mr. Cross, or Mr. Harpin nor Ms. Rogers appeared to use their teacher's desks during classroom instruction. The desk served more as a holding place for the teacher's computer, files and other personal effects.

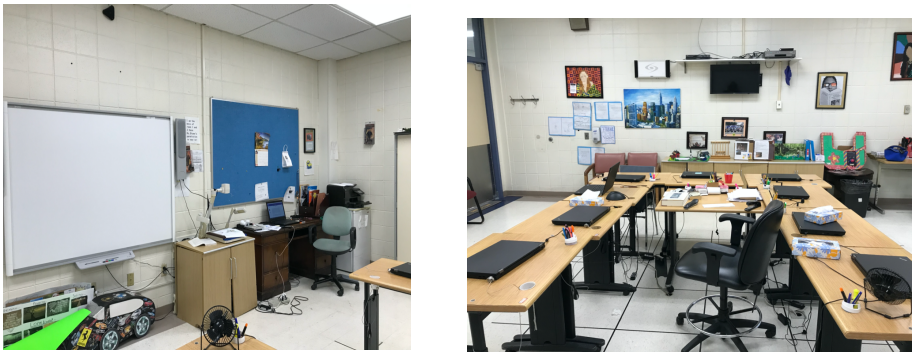

Figure 10: Images from Saturn high school classrooms.

The student desks in both Mr. Cross and Mr. Harpin's room were located towards the center of the room. In Mr. Cross's room the desks were arranged in a U shape with a table and chair located in the middle of the U where Mr. Cross sometimes sat during classroom instruction. His classroom walls were adorned with previous years' literature projects and motivational posters related to a variety of literacy practices, such as close reading, and identifying the elements of a text.

Mr. Harpin's classroom was located one room away from Mr. Cross on the left hand side of the high school hallway. Mr. Harpin was a self-professed fan of comic books, professional wrestling and super hero movies. At the front of his classroom next to the Smart board was a large wooden bookshelf filled with course textbooks and other materials. The bookshelf was littered with various action figures, mostly wrestling figures and super heroes in various corners and ledges. Mr. Harpin's desk was on the same wall on the opposite side of the Smart board. During instruction Mr. Harpin typically invited

students to leave their desks and position themselves closer to the front of the room, arranged in a semi-circle near the Smart board. Mr. Harpin sat or stood adjacent to the semi-circle of students and moved around while delivering instruction, which usually took the form of an interactive PowerPoint slide presentation.

The Media Arts classroom, as stated, was located in another part of the school. It was larger than Mr. Cross and Mr. Harpin's classrooms and rectangular in shape. Referred to as a technology-rich environment, the Media Arts classroom housed multiple computer workstations, a Smart board, and a video-recording area. The room also included a laminator, laser cutter and 3-D printer. There were two rows of desktop computers oriented towards the front of the room where a Smart board was affixed to the wall.

Figure 11: Media arts classroom.

On the left hand side was a video recording area that included a green screen. It was an interior classroom, so while the room included a wall with windows, they look across the hallway to the Art classroom. Ms. Rogers' desk was pushed in the back left-hand corner

of the room. Typically during classroom instruction and “independent” work time the students were positioned in front of their computer workstations.

Figure 12: Additional images from Media arts classroom.

As I noted in the youth data refrain, the Media Arts classroom was the one classroom space where I spent time with students from both 12th grade groups. Having provided a description of the physical schooling spaces of the Saturn school, I now turn to a brief historical description of the school.

History of the Saturn School

The Saturn School was founded in 1962, before the passing of the legislation requiring that all youth receive free access to public education (FAPE) (PL 94-142, EAHCA, 1975). Initially, Saturn served as a school for youth who were physically disabled and unable to attend their local school. This was due to either the local school’s physical inaccessibility, or other practices of exclusion based on the widespread conflation at that time (late 1960s) between physical impairment and cognitive capability

(Dudley-Marling & Gurn, 2010). This ongoing conflation of ability and impairment was part of the impetus to open up the Saturn School to serve the population of youth who were unable to attend their local public school often for reasons related to their physical impairment. Taking a more social model approach, the Saturn School located impairment as a potential barrier, not a deficit, and positioned itself as a school for youth with physical impairments who otherwise possessed the capabilities necessary to follow what at the time was referred to as the "regular education curriculum."

Due to a specific provision of the education law (§4201) in the state where the Saturn School is located, the school was established as a state-funded private school for youth with low-incidence disabilities. 4201-funded schools are private schools that receive state funding through Medicaid, allowing for the provision of educational and related services. In its original iteration, the Saturn School enrolled students primarily with physical impairments who had been turned away or refused enrollment at their neighborhood or local public school. A school serving grades PreK-12, historically, Saturn touted itself as a place that academically mirrored its community school counterparts but with minimal physical barriers for students with mobility disabilities. Families who sought to have their child attend Saturn underwent a battery of evaluations and assessments, including psycho-educational testing to determine the cognitive capabilities of the child. For about the first 30 years, the Saturn School required a specific type of cognitive capability to be demonstrated before offering enrollment. In discussing the history of the Saturn School, Mr. Cross, one of the 12th grade English teachers, said,

> You have to remember the kids here [historically] they were trying to leave here with the same credentials as students in public school. In order to do that, this school at the time, only offered courses, which led to the state's exam.

Building on this history of the Saturn School Mr. Harpin, one of the 12th grade Social Studies teachers, shared,

> When I first started here it was very much like a regular ed school for kids in wheelchairs. We had no alternative assessment classes, pretty much every kid had to take the state exam. I mean I'm not sure why [the student population shift] happened but I believe it's probably because a lot more of those kids would now be given the opportunity to stay in high schools that now have more accessibility and things of that nature.

Though many of the original goals at Saturn remain, over the past two decades the school shifted its admissions requirements and now enrolls a wider array of youth labeled with low incidence disabilities such as intellectual disabilities, vision and hearing impairment, other health impairment, and multiple disabilities. As a result, there is more emphasis on modifying and accommodating instruction for students who require academic support than in the early years. Still there remains an emphasis at the Saturn School on academics and mirroring the curriculum from local public schools whenever possible. I elaborate on this in later sections but there remains a significant percentage of youth attending the Saturn School today who participate in state exams and attend college after graduation. This feature of the school remains a point of pride for administrators at the Saturnalia Center, who often state that more than 90% of the graduating class attends college or post-secondary vocational training. Still, as I show in this chapter, that is slowly changing.

Shifting student populations at the Saturn School. From a historical perspective the Saturn School is a compelling microcosm of special education laws and policies since the middle of the 20th century. As stated, the founder of Saturnalia opened the Saturn School 13 years ahead of the existence of FAPE. This means at the time, the founder of the Saturnalia Center offered something quite rare to families of youth with

labeled physical disabilities. In more recent years, since the passing of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 and the re-authorization of IDEIA in 2004, and as reform movements such as inclusive education gained more traction in local public schools, the population of students with mobility impairments that previously attended Saturn became more likely to stay at their local district school. Theoretically, advances in design and technology have made it possible for local public schools to mitigate potential barriers to access for a wider range of students.

Mr. Cross, the English teacher, who often focused on money and resources, expressed his belief that local public school districts have figured out that students with labeled disabilities receive more state funding. According to Mr. Cross as budgets are cut more deeply, local public schools attempt to find ways to support students and mitigate barriers to access within the school district. This may be because the district receives state funding for enrolling a disabled student and the district does not have to pay for the child to attend an out-of-district or independent school. When local school districts are unable to provide services at a young person's home school, they are required by law to pay for enrollment at a school such as the Saturn School which is able provide services a young person may require to access the curriculum.

Both Mr. Harpin and Mr. Cross have worked at the Saturn School for over 10 years. Each noted the shifting population at the Saturn School. During his interview, Mr. Harpin explained:

> I believe that now our populations shifted more toward kids with more severe disabilities, who the (general education) school still can't really accommodate them. A lot of them have severe medical needs and things like that, but also some

> of them are more of alternative assessment kids[7] and things like that. I think that's one of the reasons why we've expanded our reach because less of those kids [youth with physical impairments] were coming to us. So I think in order to keep our numbers up we did that.

Adding to Mr. Harpin's explanation Mr. Cross provides another perspective on the *why* of the student population at Saturn School shifted. He shared,

> [Our] school has the related services in the building to make the students able to access the curriculum. I would say one of the biggest shifts is higher-functioning kids[8] have been held back in district. For a number of different reasons, I think mostly due to funding. In most cases I believe. On the other hand, students when I first arrived here, to the students today, I would say some of the students today, when I arrived here were probably were still in a hospital setting. Now with modern medicine, nursing technology, we are servicing kids here that [in the past] may have never been in school before. So now, we're filling a piece of the puzzle that was never filled before. As a result obviously the program has to shift.

Building on Mr. Cross's observation about the new population of students the Saturn School was able to support, Mr. Harpin shared the following story about a former student.

> There was a kid who came in 10th grade and he was trying to get in forever. His mom was a special education teacher and she knew about us (the Saturn School) and wanted to get him in but he was alternative assessment[9] and we wouldn't take him. Once we kind of lifted that veil and said we'll take alternative assessment

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[7] As noted in the youth data refrains, alternative assessment refers to the way disabled youth who do not participate in the standardized state exam are assessed by the state. Often, in schools, due to how youth are sorted and classified the term "alternative assessment" becomes a label, which is affixed to a student or group of students. As Mr. Harpin used it in this quote, alternative assessment acts as a semantic placeholder for the population of students with disabilities who do not participate in the standardized state exam. In that way the term "alternative assessment kids" is a more benign for older more damaging terms used to refer to people with disabilities such as, "trainable" and "uneducable" (Trent, 1994). It serves as another way to identifying and classifying students as a result of their disability classification. Mr. Harpin uses this phrasing multiple times in our interview as a way to distinguish between students who participate in the standardized state exam and those students who do not.

[8] I address language/ terms used by the adults at Saturn in the following chapter.

[9] See footnote above, again here Mr. Harpin demonstrates how he affixes the label of "alternative assessment" to the young person in his story, as if this is part of the young person's identity, when in reality this is merely a distinction for how the young person is assessed by the state, this is addressed in chapter VI.

> kids, he was literally the first kid we took. She had him here and since then he's gone on to the Saturnalia Post-Grad program[10] where now he's learning skills and things like that. It's been a benefit because we've had kids that now showed up here that have been like "Hey! We've been trying to get in here for 10 years and for 10 years we were told: no we couldn't come. Because we (the Saturn School) doesn't take alternative assessment kids. And now, they take them.' That's really changed a lot of our kids' lives

Part of the reason why the Saturn School decided to lift its enrollment parameters in the past decade and begin accepting a wider range of youth with low incidence disabilities was driven by federal funding policies and to ensure maintenance of a certain number of enrolled students. I share Mr. Cross and Mr. Harpin's detailed descriptions, not only to provide context but also to add a counterpoint refrain to the youth data shared in . In their descriptions, both Mr. Cross and Mr. Harpin use phrases such as "alternative assessment kids", and "higher functioning" which suggests a deficit orientation towards ability. Within these descriptions there also exists other models or ways of thinking about ability. Mr. Harpin and Mr. Cross describe this shift in terms of how they order or classify the different youth profiles, but they also suggest possibilities for the youth Saturn now enrolls. This highlights a tension of the space produced at the Saturn School that I discuss more in the day-to-day practices section of this chapter. The main point is that across both youth and adult data refrains the "ideology of ability"[11] (Siebers, 2008) were pervasive. Yet, this data is peppered with moments, which suggested other models or

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[10] A post-secondary program run by the Saturnalia Center for youth enrolled at the Saturn School until they turn 21.

[11] As discussed in Chapter II, the ideology of ability refers to the dominant acceptance of the nondisabled body and mind. A belief that there is a tangible normal which all human beings must aspire to and that anyone with impairment is less than or deviant.

ways of thinking about ability that were also present within the Saturn School space, I return to these momentarily.

Features of physical accessibility. Another point of pride for the school is the focus on physical accessibility. Most of the hallways at the Saturn School are wide enough for two large motorized wheelchairs to pass by one another with room in-between. Similarly, all the doorways to classrooms and other rooms/office at the school are either swinging or sliding doors. There are no push/pull doorknob doors located in the school, except perhaps for a random supply closet. Each doorframe is slightly wider than what is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The principal of the Saturn School told me that a few years ago they realized how large some motorized wheel chairs and other mobility aids were becoming. This prompted the school and Center to raise the money to have all doorways widened to accommodate this shift in the apparatuses students use to move around the school.

Figure 13: Modified doorway at the Saturn School.

One accessibility feature is the lack of chairs within most places students use and occupy during the school day. Since many students attending the Saturn School use wheelchairs or other mobility aids, regular chairs become prohibitive in the space. Student desks are often placed without a chair. Instead a few chairs line the back wall of classrooms and offices.

Figure 14: Media arts classroom with limited chairs.

Figure 15: Mobility aids in the occupational therapy suite.

Beyond the ways physical accessibility was addressed within the Saturn School, one of the other unique features of the Saturn School is the medical clinic located within the school building. The medical department consists of four nurses and one school physician. While both youth and adults from the Saturnalia Center may access the medical clinic, it is primarily for youth attending the school who require medical care throughout the school day. It is located across from the Speech and Language therapy offices and looks like a typical hospital clinic with linoleum tile floors and plastic-cased walls.

Current iteration(s) of the Saturn School. Today the Saturn School is organized as a PreK-12th school for youth with low incidence disabilities. The school offers a range of programs for youth aged 4-21 years old, including specialized classroom instruction, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, access to counseling and other medical services, all within the main school building. Another key feature of the Saturn School today is its small student population and class size. The current total student enrollment for the school is 185 young people.

Since the Saturn School historically aimed to serve youth labeled with physical disabilities, there remains an emphasis at the high school level that all youth (who are interested) apply for college or pursue post-secondary programs, such as, vocational training. This remains an important way that Saturn distinguishes itself from other schools for youth labeled with disabilities in the area as well as special education programs and services within local community schools. The Saturn School strives to model itself to the outside world as an array of programs and services that include rigorous and meaningful academic instruction for all students.

Beginning in middle school, the Master schedule is departmentalized, meaning that students are broken up into different groups, mostly tied to their academic capabilities. By 12th grade the students are accustomed to changing classes throughout the day, as opposed to remaining in one classroom with one teacher for the duration of the school day (which is the model in the elementary school). There are two content area teachers for each subject in the middle and high school programs at Saturn. This means that it is inevitable that students receive instruction from the same or similar teachers across their four years of high school, and depending on when they entered Saturn, during middle school as well.

A final key feature of how the Saturn School is organized is the way the related service provisions are structured. As Mr. Cross stated, "The school has the related services in the building to make the students able to access the curriculum." Related services, such as counseling, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT), are all offered within the school building. Related services provisions are also built into the Master schedule for the high school students. This means that there are two periods a week referred to as RSS (related service supervision) where each student attends whichever related services are mandated by their individualized education plan.

Mr. Cross explained that before the shift in student population there were more "push-in" related services, since instructional time was always paramount. Still, from the beginning at Saturn, related services were never something that disrupted or took the place of instructional time, especially in the middle and high school programs. In its more recent organization the Saturn School treats related service as a part of the school day.

While not all students receive the same amount of related services, by building it into the Master schedule, instead of organizing related services as a "pull out" service which removes youth from their instructional day, students are provided with both academic instruction and service provision in less disruptive ways. Some "push-in" service model delivery remains, especially for students identified with multiple disabilities who may require services such as sign language interpretation during classroom instruction.

Each related service provider (or team) maintains his or her own space (or spaces) in the school. There were upwards of seven Speech and Language pathologists on staff who spent their entire workday at the Saturn School. The OT and PT had a similar team of trained professionals who either worked at Saturn School full-time or spent large portions of their workday at the school. This is quite different from how service provision is structured and organized at many local public schools. Typically, in public schools, related services such as speech, OT or PT are offered during the school day and overlap with instructional time, meaning a young person is pulled out (removed) from the classroom to receive their service. Often a public school contracts one or two related service providers per area of delivery (e.g., Speech, OT, PT) who work across a few different school sites.

In some instances, if public schools are unable to locate service providers the families of youth with labeled disabilities are sent vouchers to redeem for services. This puts the onus on the family to coordinate with the provider outside of the school day, often in another location, such as a physical therapy office. This is a non-issue at the Saturn School since all services are included in the Master schedule and provided during the school day. Each youth's schedule includes a period for Related Service Supervision

(RSS) between one to five times a week related to their education plan. During the dedicated RSS period the youth attends any related services. Finally, all services are located within the Saturn School building, which allows youth to receive all necessary services during their school day.

These three features: physical access to instruction, small class sizes and related service provision help to position the Saturn School as continuing to fill a specific need, especially for youth with low-incidence disabilities. As Mr. Cross shared, “They could put a disability education program in every school, which they should! But I think this place [the Saturn School] will always have a place in society.” Saturn does not model other private independent schools for disabled youth in the area, many of which cater to families of a higher socio-economic status. Part of this is due to its 4201 status, as the Saturn School is required to enroll youth with low incidence disabilities in order to received state funding. Many of the students who attend the Saturn School come from across the region and represent a range of races, ethnicities and socio-economic statuses. The school primarily enrolls youth from local regional public school districts, because the district was unable to provide the proper academic and social/emotional supports for the young person to access the curriculum. As stated in the youth data refrain, public school was often (if not always) the referent for adults at the school. Having provided some historical context about the Saturn School, I now move to the refrains from the collected data regarding the daily routines and practices of the Saturn School, which resonate across the collected data.

Daily Routines of the Saturn School

In this section I identify three refrains from across my ethnographic field note and adult interview transcript data. I offer these themes as counterpoint refrains to the youth data shared in Exposition Two. I begin with the refrain of time to show how the space at Saturn School was producing and produced by the youth and adult interactions. I then move to describe the refrain of independence/interdependence towards co-production, which highlights how instructional work time was conceived within the Saturn School space. Finally, I end with a discussion of the practice of curricular patching a final refrain, which shows how the adults navigated the aforementioned ideology of ability through their curriculum design, often leading to youth and adult interactions, which limited the possibilities of the co-produced space.

Time. One thing I noticed early in my data collection at the Saturn School was the bell schedule. The official school day began at 8:35 a.m., and the school's Master schedule was organized around 50 minute timed periods through out the school day. While a bell did ring to signal the start and end time of each period, this appeared to be more of a suggestion. It was rare that all students were present in a given room by the time the bell rang signaling the beginning of the class period. It was common for students to arrive 10-15 minutes after the first bell. This pattern repeated throughout the school day. The automated bell, which was coordinated with the timing of the Master schedule, would ring and the teachers would dismiss the class allowing students to move to their next subject. I found it consistently perplexing that the passing period between classes at the Saturn School was three minutes. This was clearly not enough time for students to move from one classroom space to another. Kafer (2017) states, "Rather than bend

disabled bodies and minds to meet the clock, Crip time bends the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds" (p. 27). The Saturn School was built on one level and spread across a large area of land, so for a student, especially one who used a mobility aid such as a wheelchair, moving from corner of the school where the cafeteria was located back to the high school wing took three minutes at a fast clip. It was more likely to take a young person 5-7 minutes to move from one part of the school to another.

In that way the space produced by the youth within the Saturn School was one that required the bending of time. The adults supported this bending by allowing youth to enter the classroom well after the bell rang. The adults incorporated this time into their classroom instruction, sometimes stretching opening activities or using the beginning of class to check in with youth in smaller groups or one on one. I remained confounded as to why the Saturn School relied on a bell schedule to keep time, except that it is a deeply rooted traditional structure of the public schools, which the administrators at Saturn strive to replicate.

To provide an example of how youth and adults interacted together to bend time, I share some moments from Mr. Cross's fifth period English class. This class met right after lunch. It often took at least half of the students in the class upwards of 10 minutes to arrive at Mr. Cross's classroom. This was mostly due to the time students required to clean up after lunch, use the restroom (if needed) and receive any necessary medical care. Never once while hanging out in Mr. Cross's classroom did I observe him chastise a student for arriving late. I noticed a similar practice across all three classrooms. It appeared that at the Saturn School it was assumed that youth might arrive late or leave classes early. This was related to the health and movement requirements of the students,

which often took the form of taking more time than a structured bell schedule could anticipate.

Mr. Cross's 5th period English class included Brian, Mark, Nathan, Ron and Sapphire along with 4 other 12th graders who elected not to participate in the dissertation study. During this class, Mr. Cross's instruction focused on reading and responding to literature, from a range of texts, either through speaking or writing[12]. This vignette, derived from my ethnographic field notes, occurred during late March, as Mr. Cross geared up for April which is poetry month.

> *Four students were in the classroom when I arrived right after lunch, the class had 9 students on the roster. As I entered the room Mr. Cross was explaining to the students already present that he chose a poem to read today that he read in college. He described how when he read the poem in college it made him pause because the topic moved him. He shared that the poem moved him because of the way the poet used the language to create an image in his mind. He told the students this is called figurative language. Mr. Cross told the students the poem was called "123rd St. Rap" by Willie Perdona. After Mr. Cross read the title, a male student said, "That's lit." The following discussion ensued…*
>
> ***Mr. Cross:*** *What does it's 'lit', mean?*
>
> ***Sapphire****: It might mean…I don't know how to explain it.*
>
> ***Male student:*** *(to Mr. Cross) "You don't know because you don't say it. We say it."*
>
> ***Mr. Cross:*** *What does 'lit' mean?"*

[12] Speaking and writing were often supported by the use of AAC devices and/or typing on laptops, or dictating while an adult in the room type verbatim on a laptop.

Ron: *(talking as he entered the classroom about 10 minutes late) That means it's awesome.*

Everyone in the room laughed. Ron's timing was perfect. He immediately joined in the discussion answering Mr. Cross's question.

Mr. Cross: *All right, Ron. I get it. Lit means good, it's slang.*

Sapphire: *What other words are slang?*

While Sapphire was talking with Mr. Cross, Nathan and Mark both entered the classroom. Now that more than half of the class was present, about 15 minutes into the period, Mr. Cross began explaining figurative language to the students and how similes and metaphors are used in the poem they are about to read together in class.

Mr. Cross had intended to begin the class with this orienting discussion about the parts of figurative language. The conversation about the term "lit" was meant to be an aside, which turned into a larger class discussion about slang. While this moment took time away from Mr. Cross's instruction he did not appear frustrated with this detour in the moment. Instead, he used Nathan and Mark's late entrance into the classroom as a way to turn the conversation back towards his initial instructional aim. I now return to the vignette to show another way Mr. Cross engaged with time during his instruction.

Turning to Sapphire, Mr. Cross explained that a simile might help her understand a slang word because similes were a way of describing things. Mr. Cross then began to read the poem (see appendix for poem). He read aloud, slowly and deliberately. As he was reading the poem it was projected on the Smart board screen behind him. After he finished reading the poem…

Mr. Cross: *"So when I read that poem, what image did you see in your mind?"*

Male student: *That neighborhood sounds dangerous.*

Mr. Cross: *Ok, why?*

Male student: *The bullets bounce? People are shooting, dangerous.*

Mr. Cross: *(quoting the poem) "Off stoop steps." Does anybody know what a stoop is?*

The students were quiet for a moment, mulling over the question.

Ron: *Sit on the stoop, waiting for the bus.*

Mr. Cross: *Yes, Ron. The stoop is another name for the stairs in front of some houses. They are usually on the houses or apartment buildings in the city.*

Most of the students nod their head affirming they understood what Mr. Cross described.

Mr. Cross: *Should I read the poem again?*

Several students again nod their heads or indicate "yes". Mr. Cross begins to read the poem again. This time he reads two lines at a time, and then pauses.

Mr. Cross: *What else do you hear and see?*

Here Mr. Cross used time in another way, offering to read the poem again, when he noticed that the students were a bit hesitant to verbally respond to his questions about the poem. Again, this appeared as a departure from Mr. Cross's intended lesson for that day. At the outset of the period, when only a few students were present in the room he shared he wanted to read the 123rd street poem, introduce figurative language and then each student would begin writing their own figurative language poem. Mr. Cross remained open to bending time to support student participation and engagement during this

activity. Time may be understood as a *suggestion* in Mr. Cross's classroom; a goal he works towards (to complete the instructional activity in the 47 minute period) but never fully accomplished. During data collection, I never heard Mr. Cross offer a description or even recognition of the ways he bent time in his instruction. Yet, in practice he regularly stretched time to support his students during the 5th period English class.

There was another way time Mr. Cross's stretched time in his classroom that may not quite come across in a typed vignette. It was in the pacing and delivery of his instruction. While verbal conversation and discussion was the main mode of engagement and participation, on this afternoon Mr. Cross included pauses and wait-time throughout his questioning. As an example, after he read the poem for the 2nd time he offered a series of questions to the students:

> *Mr. Cross: (reading another line from the poem) "'Church bells bong for drunken mourners.' These are some examples of figurative language. Do you hear the sounds of the city? [paused in silence for 5 seconds] Do you hear a siren as I read sections of the poem? [paused in silence for 2-3 seconds] As I read the poem we should all start to develop a visual picture in our heads. What do you think makes where you live? Where you live? [paused in silence for 5 seconds] How would you describe your neighborhood in a way that creates an image for another person in their head? [paused in silence for 2-3 seconds] So, if I say busy street, how many people see something? Do you get a picture in your mind?" [paused in silence for 2-3 seconds]. Once Mr. Cross finished asking the questions, he paused again. There was no expectation that anyone needed to immediately respond.*

Long pauses might make one feel uncomfortable. Yet I noticed consistently in Mr. Cross's classroom amidst all the ongoing conversations these pauses had the opposite effect. Instead of discomfort, they were moments for processing. It also supported the range of engagement and response styles from the students. Mr. Cross's 5th period English class had two students, Nathan and Mark who used AAC devices to communicate. Students were provided with time to process Mr. Cross's questions, in order to support their participation in the class. The wait time Mr. Cross provided not only gave students time to process, it also provided Mark and Nathan with extended time to craft responses using their AAC devices, both of which relied upon eye-gaze technology. As a result of the wait time Mr. Cross provided, most if not all students participated in the class discussion either via AAC or verbal communication.

To build on this conceptualization of time, I now move to Mr. Harpin's classroom, one door away from Mr. Cross's classroom to show how time was conceptualized in his classroom space. Mr. Harpin's second period Economics class included Tanya, Paul, Ullrich and Brian, along with three other students who elected not to participate in this study. I share a short vignette from this class, which showed how Mr. Harpin used the practice of time as a way to center student inquiry.

> *I arrived at the Economics class as the period started and sat towards the side of the room outside the semi-circle of students who were arranged in front of the Smart board. Mr. Harpin was standing at the front of the room pulling up a YouTube video about "public and private goods." This was an extension of the previous week's lesson about supply and demand. Mr. Harpin reminded the students about the various materials used by people in society and asked if said*

materials were paid for privately or publicly. Then, Mr. Harpin started the YouTube video and after a few moments paused the clip to reiterate or expand upon a statement made in the video. While the video was paused, Brian (student) raised his hand.

Brian: *So then, why do companies do a student discount?*

Mr. Harpin: *Well, it's because often students aren't working because they are going to school. That is supposed to be their job, even though a lot of students have to work. So companies, realizing that students might have a lot of money, want to incentivize their products so they offer discounts just for students.*

Mr. Harpin started the YouTube video again. To demonstrate how goods were shared, the video showed a picture of two stick figures trying to share one pair of jeans. Mr. Harpin paused the video.

Mr. Harpin: *Can you share a pair of jeans, not awkwardly?*

The class laughed.

Students: *No!*

Mr. Harpin: *This is an example of a private good. If you buy jeans they become yours. You don't share them. That would be weird.*

The class laughed again.

Mr. Harpin started up the video again.

Paul: *Wait, can you pause it?*

Mr. Harpin: *Yes [he paused video]*

Paul: *So that one has jeans, those have underwear and the rest are naked? [Referring to the stick figures depicted in the YouTube video]*

Mr. Harpin: *[laughs] Yeah. I guess so.*

Similar to Mr. Cross's discussion about the term "lit," Mr. Harpin stretched time to listen and respond to questions that students might have as they engaged with the video together. Mr. Harpin demonstrated this through his interactions with youth in the above vignette by responding to the random questions students asked, which required him to pause the video. Allowing for conversation in room between the youth and himself, Mr. Harpin did not appear pressed for time and fostered an organic conversational space during his instruction for the Economics class.

Another example of how Mr. Harpin stretched time was the capstone project he developed for the Economics class. The capstone was a "Shark Tank" project where each student developed a mock product proposal that they pitched to a panel of adults working at Saturn. It seemed the Economics course allowed Mr. Harpin to establish a classroom space that was more generous and creative in how time was used, (e.g., allowing for conversational detours, not feeling bound by a state exam) and in the ongoing student work and projects (e.g., Capstone Shark Tank project).

Early on in the data collection period Mr. Harpin told me that the Economics class was a college credit course. As a result there was no standardized exam for this class. Instead the students were required to complete a capstone project. During our interview, Mr. Harpin told me that he taught Social Studies to the group of students currently enrolled in his Economics course since ninth grade. The previous three years of social studies coursework for this group, which included Brian, Tanya, Paul and Ullrich, was tied to a state standardized exam. Mr. Harpin was required to cover the material on the state exam during his instruction that required him to be "very strict with the curriculum,"

as opposed to this year with the Economics class. During our interview Mr. Harpin shared,

> I can have fun with [the Economics curriculum]. I can go wherever the kids want me to go. [Because] they are on a field trip to Google today [yesterday] I did a whole history of Google lesson. [I have] the freedom to do that kind of stuff and also to not worry about when [youth in Economics class] are out on a field trip. My 10th graders go out on a field trip; I'm giving them extra homework because "Hey, you're missing a [state exam] lesson". With the [Economics class] I like that freedom to be in a bubble where you don't have time constraints and that stuff.

The "freedom to be in a bubble where you don't have time constraints" allowed Mr. Harpin to design instruction for the Economics class that was student-centered and not driven by preparing students for the state test. This also suggested that Mr. Harpin possessed a tacit awareness of how the classroom environment shifted based on the curricular goals (preparing for a state exam or not).

As the Kafer (2017) quote suggests above, time is malleable in that it helps to organize the physical environment. Across my observations there was an orientation towards time, which suggested that at the Saturn School things take as long as they take. This idea was often located in the ways the students required more time, either to move from one location to another or in participating in a classroom discussion/activity. The ways the adults both followed and stretched the bell schedule remained a helpful organizing frame that addressed how time was conceptualized at the Saturn School. This ability to maintain a flexible posture towards time reflected the ways in which the school was made physically accessible. Standardized exams and state testing appeared to disrupt ways adults conceived time at the Saturn School. The pressure of preparing youth for a state exam (similar to other U.S. public schools) did seem to impact the more malleable practices of time present within the schooling space. How the adults participants

described time in relation to standardized testing hints at an overarching resonance I piece together across the data refrains in this chapter connected to the circulating ideas of ability. I move now to another data refrain, independence/interdependence towards co-production to show how the term "independence" was described by the adults, but then enacted in practice more as interdependence and/or co-production.

Independence towards interdependence and co-production. As I collected data with the 12th grade youth and adult participants across the classrooms, I witnessed layered interactions, which disrupted commonly held assumptions (or definitions) of independence. I begin with a vignette in the Media Arts classroom and then return to Mr. Cross's classroom to further explicate this refrain of independence/interdependence working towards an understanding of co-production. I am drawing here from the work of Bell & Pahl (2017) who define co-production as a research method, which grew out of participatory research methods. Similarly, Liddiard, Runswick-Cole, Goodley, Whitney, Vogelmann & Watts (2018) define "co-production" as an orientation or method of research which involves disabled research participants in the co-creation of research. I use the concept of "co-production" in this chapter as a refrain generated from my ethnographic field notes and other interview transcript data in how adults and youth interacted, often in concert, to produce curricular artifacts across the school day at Saturn. Here, I refer to the daily routines, invoking co-production less as a research method and more as a phenomena I observed during the daily practices of the Saturn School adults and youth which informed the classroom work, often referred to as "independent work time." I put the term "independent work" in quotes to highlight that the term "independent" is a misnomer in its presumption that it as a self-evident characteristic

which can be measured and observed. Before going further I share examples from the data across the three classrooms to show what I mean by the practices of interdependence and co-production. I begin in Ms. Roger's Media Arts classroom.

As I entered the Media Arts classroom at the beginning of 3rd period, Ms. Rogers let me know that it was a small group that day. The students were working on silhouette photos, which they had photographed earlier in the week. Now students were tasked with creating PhotoShop collages based on their interests and editing images using PhotoShop to fit within the shape of their silhouette. I noticed that Ms. Lacey is seated alongside Nathan's computer station, catching him up because he was absent the previous day. Ms. Lacey explained to Nathan that he needed to look for images on the internet, which visually represented his interests. Nathan used his AAC device to say: "Vk it's social media." Ms. Lacey shook her head slowly and told Nathan she didn't know what he was talking about. Ms. Eileen (the other TA in the Media Arts classroom) hopped on the computer next to Ms. Lacey and Nathan and googled "VK". She turned to Ms. Lacey and confirmed, "Yes it's a Russian social media site." Nathan emigrated from Russia with his family when he was 8 years old. Ms. Lacey continued working with Nathan and quietly asked him about what happened the previous day. Nathan had a seizure while at school and had been sent to the Emergency Room by the medical department. Nathan started coughing and Ms. Lacey told him to cough it out and patted him on the back of the neck. Then, Ms. Lacey asked Nathan if he was going to see the new Avengers movie and suggested that he could order an Access-a-Ride and go to see the movie. For some reason this made

Nathan laugh. From across the row of computers Ms. Rogers asked: "What is going on over there?" She was seated further down the row of computers working with Sapphire on finishing her silhouette. Ms. Lacey laughed and told Ms. Rogers: "You don't wanna know!" Ms. Lacey and Nathan quietly continued their conversation while Nathan operated a switch, which enabled him to access his computer workstation. Ms. Lacey offered support by manipulating the mouse for Nathan while he operated the switch.

Ms. Rogers was seated with Sapphire working on her project. While they were working together Sapphire told Ms. Rogers that she only wanted to go to Media Arts class because all her other classes were boring. As Sapphire chose images for her silhouette Ms. Rogers zoomed in on them so Sapphire was able to see. As Sapphire began the editing process, digitally layering the selected images into her hollowed out silhouette Ms. Rogers said that she would select the areas and tell Sapphire when to press the delete key to get rid of the background. Ms. Rogers and Sapphire continued working together, with Ms. Rogers manipulating the mouse and Sapphire hitting the delete key. By the end of the period both Nathan and Sapphire completed their silhouette collages.

Figure 16: Example of silhouette collage

For another example of the practice of interdependence and co-production, I move to Mr. Cross's classroom during writing time.

> ***Mr. Cross:*** *Sapphire, have you found an image?*
>
> ***Researcher:*** *Yes, we found one.*
>
> ***Sapphire:*** *[Turns around her computer and shows Mr. Cross her image of a model at a photo shoot].*
>
> ***Mr. Cross:*** *OK, then Sapphire you can get writing.*
>
> *Sapphire dictated the beginning of her story to me and the teaching assistant typed it down. Meanwhile Mr. Cross asked to see the image Nathan located on his tablet. Nathan had recently started using eye gaze technology, which allowed him to type on his tablet (which doubled as his AAC device) by directing his gaze to specific letters on the keyboard. Earlier that morning I had spent time with Nathan during his speech and language service delivery and the eye gaze*

software was not working very well. This meant it was taking Nathan longer than usual to generate his responses. After a few moments, while Mr. Cross waited patiently, Nathan showed his image. It was of the last moments of a swimming race.

Mr. Cross: *What does it mean to you?*

Nathan smiled at Mr. Cross but did not respond to this question.

Mr. Cross: *Do you want me to tell you what I see? A swimming competition. Now write a little bit telling me what you see. See if you can copy that image to the top of your word document so you can look at the image while you write your story beneath the image.*

Mr. Cross: *[turning to the whole class] I took a risk today because I thought some students might waste the whole period looking at pictures, but I hoped that my 12th graders would find their picture and diligently get writing.*

Male student: *Mr. C, how do you spell "spectacular?"*

Mr. Cross: *Use your co-writer! It's on your laptop. Look it up, don't forget about the speak option.*

Mr. Cross checked in with each student as they were writing. As I sat with Sapphire she continued to dictate her story and the teaching assistant typed it on Sapphire's laptop. Nathan continued to look at his image of the competitive swimming completion. It was unclear if he was trying to calibrate his eye gaze or not completing the task.

Mr. Cross: *How's it going Nathan? Why not try writing? I wonder, what is in the mind of the swimmer?*

Mr. Cross continued moving around the room, redirecting students to complete their writing, offering support as needed. At 12:20pm Mr. Cross set an alarm for 12:35pm and said that when the timer chimed the group would share their stories. By this point all the students located their images, most with the support of either Mr. Cross, myself, or the two teaching assistants. Only one student worked on his own, though he was using his Co-writer™ application to support his typing.

I shared both these vignettes because each was representative of what "independent work" looked like at the Saturn School. Often, this work time was a collaborative interaction between youth and adults. While to some it may seem that the adults were doing work *for* the students, a closer more careful understanding surfaces a delicate collaborative balance, which achieved the action of working *with* the students instead of *for* them. While some students required additional support, typically the support was required not to complete the task, but to use the materials.

This took a few different forms. It was in the way Sapphire dictated her story and the Teaching Assistant in turn wrote it down for her, verbatim in the words Sapphire used. It was how Ms. Rogers helped Sapphire access the images during the silhouette collage project, by making them larger. With Nathan and Mr. Cross, it was Mr. Cross's physical proximity that encouraged Nathan to keep using his new eye gaze technology and write his story. In a similar fashion when Ms. Lacey worked with Nathan she sat close by to him, talking quietly as he used his AAC device to complete the image search, and at times manipulating the mouse if Nathan's switch was not precise enough. In this way the practices of interdependence and co-production were tied up with how adults provided ways for youth to access the curriculum but also in ways, which positioned the

youth as the generator of the planned activity. During my interview with Ms. Rogers she shared,

> I think something for me that I struggled with even going through student teaching is letting the students fail. I think educators are so quick to say: "Oh they need help; let me just go tell them the answer." You don't remember a lecture you're given a year ago. But they'll [youth] remember, "I remember when I edited that video and how hard it was and what [student name] showed me how to do". I think it's more valuable what they [youth] tell each other than what I tell them. So I'd rather them [youth] do it themselves and kind a struggle and fail and [then] succeed on their own merit than having me help them.

Mr. Harpin noted a similar outlook when he shared,

> It also depends on the environment you grew up in too, that you came up teaching in. I started here as a teaching assistant [TA]. I think that really helped me because I knew what kids could do and I also knew [how] a lot of the TAs, viewed the teachers, who would throw these ridiculous assignments at the kids, basically have it all be on the TA. That's another thing I can't stand, a lot of teachers do that and I hate it. They put the TA with the kid and the TA's doing all the work. I don't give a crap about what the TA knows I care about the kid. So that's why a lot of times, I'll ask the kid directly.

In the above quote, Mr. Harpin does not use the word "independent" though his concern connects to arguments about students completing work on their own, which Taylor (2001) refers to as the "readiness model" (p. 20). A closer reading of Mr. Harpin's excerpt above, alongside Ms. Rogers draws out more complexities. When Mr. Harpin says, "I care about the kid" he does not seem to require his students complete tasks on their own, but that he provides instructional opportunities where TA's work *with* youth, instead of *for* them. Ms. Rogers' comment adds to this when she discusses this impulse to offer support when a young person exhibits difficulty with a task.

There is a tacit presumption of competence from both Mr. Harpin and Ms. Rogers that youth at Saturn are capable of participating and engaging in classwork. Both locate the responsibility with the teacher to design curriculum, which provides youth room to try

and potentially fail, placing the onus on both the adult and youth in the classroom. This again, hints at ways of thinking about ability and capability that disrupt the more deficit-oriented ideologies of ability. Still, neither Mr. Harpin nor Ms. Rogers named this capabilities approach towards youth and their participation as interdependence. Ms. Rogers hinted at the collaborative nature of work time in how she described students working together but like Mr. Harpin, was cautious of the ways adults offer support which may disrupt student's abilities to "work on their own."

This connects back to a statement Mr. Harpin made early on about "alternative assessment kids". This deficit-tinged thinking was apparent across many interactions at the Saturn school, as shared in the opening youth data refrain. The ideology of ability circulating through the Saturn School was difficult to move past or re-orient oneself towards, even though there were young people actively disrupting this ideology through out the school day at Saturn High. While I do not seek to place blame on any one particular adult participant, I do note how these ideas of low expectations limited adults' capabilities to locate the ways their interactions *with* youth were quite novel and in many ways disrupted practices which call forth disability in their classrooms (Gaffney, 2014). Still, though the practices of interdependence and co-production established a space where working together was a valued means of participation this was rarely if ever identified by the adult participants in this study. This is my description of a practice I often observed, but rarely was described to me.

Adult interactions limiting co-production. I would be remiss if I did not share the other side of the moments of co-production (and by extension hindering interdependence) I witnessed in practice during data collection at the Saturn School. Moments symptomatic

of the deficit orientations adult participants sometimes leaned towards. Here is a brief example from Mr. Cross's classroom where he corrected Sapphire.

> *Mr. Cross read-through the 123rd St. poem again. After he finished the poem Mr. Cross asked the students: "What do you imagine about this neighborhood after hearing the poem again?"*
>
> ***Sapphire:*** *The neighborhood is a disaster.*
>
> ***Mr. Cross:*** *(rephrasing Sapphire's answer) Yes, it's a rough neighborhood.*
>
> ***Sapphire:*** *(exclaims) I didn't say that!*
>
> ***Mr. Cross:*** *(turns to face Sapphire, in a sort of cajoling tone) Did you forget what you said?*
>
> ***Sapphire:*** *I said. Disaster neighborhood. (emphasizing the D sound in disaster as she speaks)*
>
> ***Mr. Cross:*** *(smiles) No. That is not what you said.*

During this exchange I was seated to Sapphire's left and heard her say, "disaster". It was unclear if Mr. Cross had rephrased her response because he did not hear her. When Sapphire called him out on this revision of her statement, he immediately defaulted to the perspective that she was wrong. This was an ongoing tension with the data refrains from the Saturn School in how the adults limited both themselves and their students. While most of the daily routines at Saturn were co-created through youth and adult interactions, it was always the adults who set the parameters. I share one final vignette to illustrate how the practice of interdependence and co-production was easily co-opted by the adults'

perceptions of ability, which located the nondisabled lived experience as the preferred or norm.[13]

I came into the Media Arts classroom as third period started. During this period students were working on a PhotoShop editing activity that involved the students choosing a digital background, taking photos with Ms. Rogers in front of the green screen, and then in following classes sessions, the students edited their images using the PhotoShop software to layer the images (see student work example on page 204).

I was working with Sapphire on the day that Ms. Rogers was taking photos for students in front of the green screen. That morning, as per usual, all students were positioned in front of their computer workstations looking for background images for their photos. Ms. Lacey, Ms. Eileen and Ms. Rogers were moving in and out of the student computer workstations to help facilitate the student selection of background image. Ms. Rogers let the students know that once they selected a background image and showed it to her the students she would take their photo in the green screen area of the classroom.

By the middle of the period several students had selected their background image and received approval from Ms. Rogers. Sapphire had selected an Eiffel Tower background and wanted her final image to be in the style of a fashion model photo shoot. Since Sapphire is visually impaired, I was seated next to her at the computer helping her to navigate the Google search engine. She would use

[13] In the following chapter (VI) I provide more in-depth analysis of how ideology of ability and emphasis on the concept of "normal" often limited the adult participants within the Saturn schooling space.

the keyboard keys to zoom in on an image in order to see what it said. I was helping by filling in the rest of the text that might be cut off as she zoomed in.

Figure 17: Green screen area in the media arts classroom.

Once she selected her background, it was Sapphire's turn to take her picture in front of the green screen. Ms. Rogers called her over from across the room and asked Sapphire to position her wheelchair in the center of the green screen area. Ms. Rogers was holding a large piece of green fabric, at first I thought it was to show Sapphire the green screen material up close, due to her vision impairment. Instead, I heard Ms. Rogers ask: Do you want to edit your chair out?

Sapphire: *Yes.*

Ms. Rogers: *Ok.*

Ms. Rogers then took the large piece of green fabric and carefully draped it across Sapphire's lap and over the armrests and large wheels of the chair. Ms. Rogers did this wrapping with much tenderness and care.

Ms. Rogers: *When we start to edit your photo in the PhotoShop software anything that is the color green, you can replace with another image. Ms. Rogers took a step back. All done, let's take some pictures.*

Sapphire: *Ok, I am ready.*

Ms. Rogers: *Remember, you get three different poses. That means I take three different photos. I won't take any more than three, are you ready? It's time for your fashion shoot Sapphire. Smile for the camera!*

Sapphire emphatically nodded her head yes. Ms. Rogers began taking the photos. Once Ms. Rogers finished taking Sapphire's photos she called up Nathan. Nathan moved his wheelchair over to the green screen area. He had selected a karate themed background and planned to edit his image as a staged fight from the film Kung Fu Panda. Ms. Rogers leaned in and asked Nathan if he would like his wheel chair edited out of the photo. He gestured to the right hand side of the wheelchair he used, which is how he indicated "Yes" without having to rely on his eye gaze AAC device. This continued until the period ended. As each student moved to the green screen area for Ms. Rogers to take their photo she asked if the student wanted to edit out their wheelchair or mobility aid. Each student, who was a wheelchair user, responded that yes, they wanted to edit out their chair.

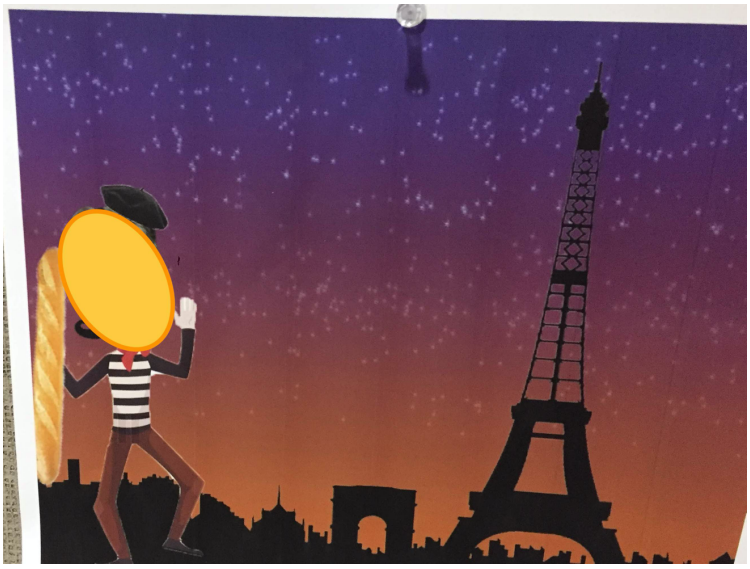

Figure 18: Final student photoshop with wheelchair edited out and legs edited in

The interaction of Ms. Rogers asking each student if they wanted to remove their wheel chair or mobility aid from the photo demonstrated how she attempted to work with students by asking for their input. Yet, this reading is too generous because the following week when I sat with Ron and Ms. Lacey as they edited his image, he turned to Ms. Lacey and asked, "Wait, where is my wheelchair?" Ms. Lacey responded by telling Ron he chose to have it edited out. Ron appeared mystified by this choice and told Ms. Lacey that he did not remember saying that was what he wanted. He did not push the issue, and went back to work with Ms. Lacey. In the final image Ron edited with Ms. Lacey's support he was seated on a camel in a desert with pyramids in the background. The fact that Ms. Rogers, who did not identify as physically disabled, considered the wheelchair or other mobility aids as something that students might want to remove demonstrated one way disability/ability was taken up in the Media Arts space. I build upon this in the next chapter to discuss **more explicitly** how refrains of ability, disability and normalcy

resonated within the Saturn School. This refrain, “We are all different, so we are all same,” came up quite often amongst the adult participants at Saturn, which emphasized how the adults perceived of the students and interpreted their lived experiences. Mr. Harpin demonstrated this when he said,

> Especially for a lot of our kids, some of their lives aren’t that great. If you can make them laugh and forget about what’s going on in their own personal lives for a while that really does I think help them learn because they don’t have to worry about, “Oh what’s wrong with me today,” or something like that, so sometimes that kind of helps them relax.

While this mindset was not overtly negative, I came to think of it as tinged with auspices of deficit thinking, making assumptions that since a young person was classified with a disability and/or impairment with related medical supports, their “lives aren’t that great”. As I move to the final data refrain in this chapter I focus more explicitly on the instructional practices of how the adults at Saturn designed their daily classroom instruction. I refer the practice as “curricular patching” to show how the adult participants developed classroom activities which often bumped up against the possibilities for meaningful youth participation and engagement during classroom instruction but remained limited.

Curricular Patching. As with the previous two data refrains I first describe the practice via my ethnographic data and then offer some further framing and initial analysis based on the adult interview data. I use the term “curricular patching” to refer to a practice which resonated across the collected data at the Saturn School regarding how the adult participants designed their curriculum and instruction. At Saturn, some classes were tied to standardized exams and that drove the curriculum. The three classes where I participated and observed for this dissertation study did not end with state standardized

exams. This meant the adults possessed more curricular freedom to design instruction in these classes, but what I observed and participated in were daily lessons which appeared pieced together with varying degrees of thoughtful consideration about facilitating access, engagement and participation for all youth in the classroom.

Curricular patching then, refers to this "grab and go" and "see what sticks" attitude that I observed during my time collecting data. To offer some description of this practice, I begin with an example of Mr. Harpin's classroom instruction from my ethnographic field notes, which is an extension of the data shared when I discussed the practice of time.

> *As the class continued discussing public goods Mr. Harpin started the video again. The next topic was 'video-sharing' and Mr. Harpin stopped it again. The class started talking about YouTube and how they watch 'Shark Tank' episodes on YouTube, which is part of another ongoing project in the Economics class. A student questioned if it was legal for episodes of a television program to be made available for free on a site such as YouTube.com.*
>
> ***Mr. Harpin**: Some videos don't show up on YouTube because of things like copyright and so that is why some videos are only available on other sites like Daily Motion and Vimeo.*
>
> ***Paul:** Do you mean vImeo? [apparently Mr. Harpin pronounced it incorrectly].*
>
> ***Mr. Harpin sings:** V-I-M-E-O [to the tune of Bingo] and that's how you pirate videos.*
>
> *The class laughed. Mr. Harpin started the video again and the next topic was "forced riders". Mr. Harpin stopped the video to provide more context.*

Mr. Harpin: *I pay taxes for kids to go to school. I don't have any kids.*

Tina: *But we are your kids.*

Mr. Harpin: *(laughs) But…you don't live in my school district.*

The class laughed.

Mr. Harpin: *Ok so, I pay taxes for police but "knock on wood" never called the police in my life. I don't commit crimes.*

Paul: *But if you committed a crime, why would you be the one to call the police?*

Mr. Harpin: *You raise a good point.*

Jane enters the classroom at 10:15am, the period started at 9:53AM

Mr. Harpin: *Hi Jane, today we are talking about the private and public goods.*

Jane: *Like parks?*

Mr. Harpin: *Yes but we are also talking about things like public defense [Army]. But that's a good example of a forced rider. If I don't go to the park, but the money to keep the parks in good order comes from my taxes, that's an example of what I'm talking about. I am being forced to pay for something I do not personally use.*

Brian: *Why don't you go to parks?*

Mr. Harpin: *Well actually that was an example, I do go to parks sometimes, but let's say that I'm a person with a disability and I can't access the park. Or maybe I'm old and don't leave my house, maybe I'm a hermit who doesn't like people. I might not use the park, but because I pay my taxes some of my money still goes to park maintenance and that is an example of a forced rider.*

Mr. Harpin worked to develop a classroom, which valued student input and conversation. He often presented classroom materials visually on the Smart board (either still images or video), which acted as discussion starters. When students posed questions, even if they might be tangential, Mr. Harpin listened and responded, often finding ways to use youth contributions as a guide during classroom instruction. Attaching value and meaning to student contributions certainly added to the development of a classroom space, which engaged youth in participating. This was rarely youth directed and seemed to develop from Mr. Harpin's willingness to follow conversational detours. During his interview Mr. Harpin said,

> I think a lot of times the kids I think respond well to my humor and stuff like that. I hated boring teachers when I was growing up. It was the worst, like I'm going to sleep in the middle of your class. But if the teacher was interesting and funny I could listen to them all day. That's my philosophy, to always make the kids laugh.

Again, here Mr. Harpin was focused on the social/emotional leanings of his students, which was quite important, but did not address how he engaged in a practice, which provided multiple access points for students during his instruction. It often appeared he was patching together his classroom instructional activities, drawing from his own lived experience and interests to engage his student about various topics related to Economics. This is not to say that this practice of developing curriculum was necessarily wrong, but as I show across this theme, the outlook these three teachers shared on how they patch together their classroom instruction potentially limited themselves and how they perceived and understood their students.

I also noted Mr. Harpin's classroom instruction relied heavily on the verbal and visual modalities, as did Mr. Cross's. The instructional activities Mr. Harpin developed

often incorporated a digital slide presentation or educational video, which he explained and used to engage students in discussion. This left students, for whom this modality was less preferred in a position of passive non-participation, often seated near the Smart board, engaged in a posture of listening but rarely, if ever, taking up Mr. Harpin's invitation of discussion. To continue this exploration of the practice of curricular patching I share the following vignette from Mr. Cross's English classroom.

> *I walked into Mr. Cross's 5th period class after lunch and he greeted me excitedly. He was using a new style of writing prompt, where he displayed an image on the Smart board and asked students to free-write a story about the image. Mr. Cross excitedly told me that he wished I had been there the day before because it was the most "on task" day for this class in weeks and he told the students he was very proud with how much they had written in response to the previous day's visual prompt. Today Mr. Cross planned to continue the activity but asked that students open their laptops, and search for their own visual writing prompt. While students were looking for images, Mr. Cross positioned himself between a male student and Ron. I was seated near Sapphire and one of the teaching assistants was on my other side working with Mark. The second teaching assistant was seated towards the back of the student desks helping two other students in the class. We were all searching for images to use as a possible writing prompt. There was some idle chatter happening while each student searched for their image mostly between the student and adult to locate their image. Mr. Cross was seated near Nathan and asked him to look up an image related to an activity he liked to do.*

During this afternoon Mr. Cross aimed to build on this visual prompt activity and asked students to locate their own images. At the end of the period he expressed excitement that the youth were "the most on-task I've seen all year!" Later to me, he shared that he was pleasantly surprised that showing the image "worked." This indicated to me that while Mr. Cross pointed towards a multimodal accessible curriculum design with this instructional activity, he was not thoughtfully engaging in the ways it heightened student participation. Again, this surfaced how the space produced at Saturn was at the cusp of something more, such as a rich multimodal pedagogical moment that was never fully realized.

In contrast to the Economics and English classroom, the Media Arts classroom was a space where the practice of curricular patching appeared with more intention. This was in part due the more consistent use and presence of technology[14]. Ms. Rogers conceptualized technology as a possible support and tool for youth outside her classroom. Ms. Rogers described her classroom instruction as directly influencing her student's futures. She shared,

> I think a lot of this class could be used in their [youth] future careers. Because as somebody who might not be able to talk, but can access a computer, these are things that they [youth] can do for companies or jobs that they might not have been able to access or do without having this class [Media Arts]. Having a little bit of background, different pieces of different types of technology they [youth] can use on the computer, that's what I was going for.

Ms. Rogers patched together her curricular instruction keeping her student's futures and careers as her end goal. This was reflected in the exploratory instructional activities

[14] While I am aware of work which troubles the neutrality of technology (Alper, 2017) I suggest that for Ms. Rogers the use of technology opened more possibilities for modes of participation which pushed her own deficit-tinged thinking about her student's capabilities.

students completed. Across my time in the Media Arts classroom, students filmed and edited videos, created digital portfolios, learned how to edit images in PhotoShop, create mock food trucks, designed graduation programs and create collage silhouettes. Most of this work was done with support from adults in the room. These projects always had specific assignment directions and parameters, but as long as students followed the directions they were allowed to bring their own understanding and creativity to a project. Still, the practice of curricular patching in the Media Arts classroom came from *how* students were required to engage with the curriculum. I share the following vignette, which shows how these parameters were enacted during classroom instruction.

> *One morning I was in Ms. Rogers' 1st period class, which consisted of Tanya, Brian, Paul and Ullrich (along with four other students who did not participate in the study). This week the project was to design programs for graduation. Each 12th grader was tasked with designing a graduation program with specific requirements: it must include the school colors, a legible font and no images. If images were used they had to be silhouettes. As the students were working to design individual programs I was seated near Ullrich who was searching for silhouette images on the internet. He started smiling and turned to show me an image that was not a silhouette but included people throwing their graduation caps in the air. He said he realized it didn't meet the assignment requirements but looked great. Coming up alongside him I said that since he was creating a digital copy, why not make two copies, one that followed Ms. Rogers' instructions and one that was for him. He nodded, saying that was a good idea. He copied the image onto his program draft. At this point I moved to another part of the room to*

> *see what the other students were creating. Towards the end of the period, I noticed Ms. Lacey approach Ullrich's computer and point out that his image was not a silhouette. She reprimanded him for actively disobeying Ms. Rogers' instruction. This was not an angry statement, it was more of a chiding reminder from Ms. Lacey that Ullrich had broken a rule. Later I explained to Ms. Lacey I had suggested Ullrich do this and she told me that Ms. Rogers' did not like it when students did not follow her instructions. She said, "They just want to have fun on the internet. There is no educative value."*

This was a consistent type of interaction I observed at the Saturn school. Youth were encouraged by adults to take up instructional activities but from within specific parameters. This indicates a lack of thoughtful engagement with the various ways a young person might participate in classroom instruction. When those parameters were transgressed the contribution the young person made was rarely recognized but instead reframed by an adult in the room as "breaking the rules," or "not following directions." Instead of attending to the ways youth sought their own form of access to the instructional material/activity. This again indicated a "grab and go" attitude towards curriculum design which did not take into account the possible creativity or innovation a young person might bring to classroom instruction. There also appeared to be strict limits around what was considered appropriate educative moves and what was "off-task".

Locating the "just right porridge." Historically, the main emphasis at Saturn in regards to modifications and accommodations dealt with the physical space, and providing access to that space in meaningful ways for youth with a variety of mobility impairments. As the population of students at Saturn shifted the emphasis on

modifications and accommodations beyond the physical space to domains such as curriculum design and instructional planning increased. During our interview Mr. Harpin shared, **"**We've kind of expanded from not just one kind, we're looking for the just right porridge." Here Mr. Harpin used the analogy from the Three Little Bears fable to refer to the types of curriculum design required by teachers working at the Saturn School. He went on to say:

> [Right] now we've got, 'the porridge is too cold' and 'the porridge is too hot' with college kids and alternative assessment kids. So now we're getting all three porridges, which presents new challenges, but also benefits a lot of other kids and benefits our school because again it's still a numbers game and we do need people to keep this place open.

This search for the "just right porridge" as Mr. Harpin described it came along with challenges which involved developing multiple access points both in and out of instruction. It also surfaced how Mr. Harpin thinks about ability in how he attaches kinds of porridges (curriculum) to certain youth "college kids and alternative assessment kids." Mr. Harpin acknowledged modifications to curriculum design were necessary to support the various learners in the classroom (i.e., "getting all three porridges"). He also noted the challenges inherent in this curriculum design, yet he maintained a pragmatic distance when he stated, "we do need people to keep this place open" demonstrating that ultimately, the school needed to enroll youth and whatever curriculum design this required he embraced. Later Mr. Harpin shared,

> I mean with our kids you really can't do a one-size-fits-all curriculum so you have to modify, you have to constantly do that. A lot of times you don't even have time to stop and get approval for those things, you don't have to. I think outside the box, kind of throw stuff against the wall and see what sticks.

While Mr. Harpin discussed how he modified curriculum in order to support his students academically he does not interrogate his own curricular practice but instead maintained a

focus on the more practical aspect of designing a curriculum, which "fits" the youth. The cavalier statement, "throw stuff against the wall and see what sticks," suggested a practice of patching curriculum together, in a haphazard and experimental way. This was compounded by what Mr. Harpin then shared regarding his curricular design practice. He stated,

> I sometimes refer to it as the wild west of teaching, you don't have an administrator constantly down your back, which is great. [This] let's you have a lot more artistic freedom, like the art of teaching is something [that] I like, being able to use different methods to get kids to learn. There's a lot of times [where] it's ask for forgiveness rather than ask for permission and I just go with that method.

I share this extended quote from Mr. Harpin to demonstrate the various models or ways of thinking about ability, which were produced from within the Saturn schooling space. This thinking about ability is reflected in the curricular practice of "patching" which I observed each adult participant employ at some point during the data collection period. In his interview, Mr. Harpin equated curricular "freedom" as a way to "think outside the box" and "see what sticks." While he stated that an administrator was not "breathing down his back," in the classroom instruction I observed, he did little with this "freedom" outside of taking additional time to follow through on student's verbal contributions during a lesson. I began to consider how the practice of curricular patching was symptomatic of underlying deficit thinking and the conflicting ideologies of ability at the Saturn School. During our interview Mr. Harpin shared,

> A lot of times kids come with very low expectations [and] I find that sometimes plays to our benefit, because then you don't necessarily have parents having these high expectations of the kids, getting 90s on the [state exam] and stuff. That does [take] a lot of pressure off sometimes the kids and also the teachers.

Mr. Cross made a similar comment during our interview. He shared,

> It's a much different style of teaching. Here [Saturn school] you foster much deeper connection[s] with a smaller group of students. You're a teacher, you're a facilitator, you're a parent, you're a friend, wherein another school it's different, much more cut and dry. It is a lot more paperwork and parent headaches. [At Saturn] I have parent's apologizing to me for making a non-vegan treat for helping their child, not scolding me for giving them [student] an 85 when they actually deserved a 75 and they [the family] want it to be a 95.

Both Mr. Harpin and Mr. Cross suggested a type of curricular freedom, which connected back to families "low expectations," adding another layer to the practice of curricular patching. This suggested that part of their "grab-and-go, let's-see-what-works-and-run-with-it" attitude was rooted in deficit assumptions about the capabilities of their students. While these comments seemed more directed at what Mr. Harpin referred to as the "alternative assessment kids" it remained grounded in deficit-tinged thinking, which appeared to inform *how* the instructional activities were designed. Again this raises another tension at the Saturn school, where at some moments adults gestured toward tacit presumptions of competence, this was often followed by deficit tinged thinking, as demonstrated in the practice of curricular patching.

My aim here is to show how the ideology of ability and a capabilities approach were in ongoing harmony and discord within the spaces of the Saturn School. The more time I spent at Saturn the more I viewed the possibilities of the space being produced at the Saturn School which took up practices of curriculum design more thoughtfully and engaged with pedagogies of universal design, multimodality and accessible curricula. In the end, while there were gestures towards, or glimmers of this potentiality, it was never fully achieved by the adult participants during my data collection for this study.

Concluding Thoughts

I shared these final examples at the Saturn School to highlight the ongoing tension surrounding youth and adult interactions. The daily routines of the Saturn School often relied on a cover story that was disrupted by the actual observed practices. With each data refrain, there was sometimes distance between the interactions I observed within the space and how the adults would describe their practices from within the Saturn school. A main barrier was in the ways adults at the Saturn School offered interpretation of their own interactions with students. I end by sharing a quote from Mr. Harpin's interview, which I think shows this ongoing productive tension at the Saturn School. It occurred when I asked him to describe the Saturn School. Mr. Harpin shared,

> I mean a great way I can kind of compare this place is it's like Hogwarts, if you watch Harry Potter. A lot of our kids come from other places where they're looked at like, "Oh my god, you're a magician? That's kind of weird". They're [youth at Saturn] ostracized a lot of times. People see kids in wheelchairs [and] they automatically think they're less functioning so sometimes they're talked at like, [uses slow drawn out voice] "Hello, how are you?" and things like that will drive our kids up a wall. One of the great things about being here is all our kids are magicians. No one's looking at a kid and going "Oh my gosh? What's that?" That doesn't happen here, because everyone has something, so it's not so weird to see a kid walking around with a magic wand pulling a rabbit out of a hat. While at a public school kids would be like "what the heck is that"? I feel that gives our kids the opportunity to learn better and to not have to worry about what these other kids are thinking.

Sometimes the adults and youth through their interactions produced a space which valued youth's impairments and lived experiences with disability. This may be understood as a productive tension because it animates how the spaces themselves at Saturn both supported and disrupted these practices of time, co-production and curricular patching. I am moving here towards an analysis of how the space itself at the Saturn school and the daily routines and practices circulating within the space were both constructing and

constructed through these interactions. Having now described both spaces, (Voices and Saturn School) in their physical nature and offered descriptions of the daily routines and practices within each, I provide more in-depth spatial analysis related to the identified refrains in Chapters IV and V.

Chapter VI

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

> Throughout our lives, we are enmeshed in efforts to shape the spaces in which we live while at the same time these established and evolving spaces are shaping our lives in many different ways. We are thus inescapably embedded in the geographies around us in much the same way, as we are integral actors in social contexts and always involved in one way or another in the making of our individual biographies and collective histories.
>
> Soja (2010, p. 71)

In the first chapter of this dissertation I discussed the 8% of youth educated in "other" settings in the Center City public school district. This led to the creation of a dissertation research study, which inquired into two separate restricted educational programs, which fall into the "other" category. From this an interrogation into the label "restrictive" and its spatialized features commenced. Across the data shared in Chapters IV and V I offered descriptions and examples of the stories from within two programs labeled as "restrictive" and "other" in an attempt to learn from the lived experiences of youth and adults in both programs.

The spaces produced through out this dissertation study were physical. I occupied material classrooms and workshop spaces my research participants. Much of my data encompasses the spaces produced from within the physical spaces, which were social. This meant some interactions I observed and participated in were harder to fully articulate via text-based descriptions. In Chapter III, I discussed a plan for data analysis, which involved creating digital collages from my collected visual data along with stock images. The digital collages I created attempted to bring forward an essence of a data

refrain from either field notes or interview transcript data. Through out this chapter I share some of those collages in service of the parts of this research, which resisted textual description.

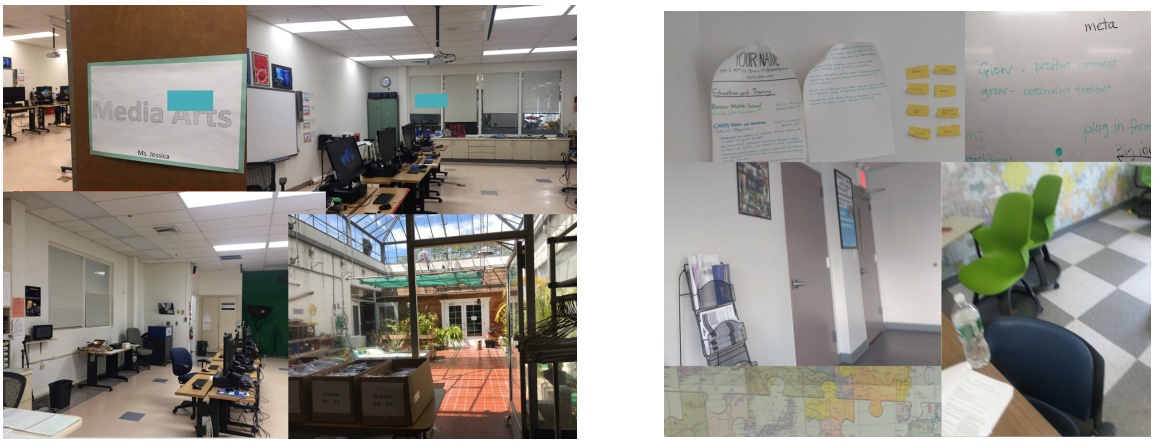

Figure 19: Two digital collages composed from still images of the Saturn School space and Voices Program Space

I return to a comment from Tanya, a youth participant from the Saturn School made to me when I asked her to describe her school. She made a small laugh and told me, "I mean we don't bring up school, we're teenagers, no one really does." In the proceeding chapter I wrote that this served as a reminder to me that all schools are in some ways restrictive spaces, and this is part of what I want to tease out through my analysis in this final chapter. How the label of "restrictive" operated in two separate programs, and what a deeper and spatialized engagement with spaces labeled "restrictive" helps to make clearer about what happens when youth occupy these spaces. My intention is to point towards understandings of my research questions and the overall goals of this dissertation study. A deeper engagement with two programs which share the label "restrictive" demonstrates the necessity of the spatial turn in educational research and how the spatial

dimension helps to re-conceptualize or re-imagine how we label and consider the spaces youth occupy across their educational career.

Discussion

In this chapter, I engage with Soja's (2010) writing about critical spatial (in) justice theory, including his discussion of the "double-sidedness" (p. 37) of space and the role spaces plays in the production of knowledge vis-à-vis a deeper interrogation of the label "restrictive." Soja (2010) states, "It is important to remember…how the spatiality of (in) justice can be both intensely oppressive and potentially liberating" (p. 37). Soja's point about the double-sidedness of space reverberated across the two restricted programs where I conducted this research in different ways. This lead me to understand that sometimes a space labeled restrictive also offered moments of possibility, such as in the youth and adult interactions at the Voices program, which often invited youth attending the program to engage creatively with the planned curricular goal for the day. Other times a space labeled restrictive limited possibilities, such as the adult and youth interactions across many of the classrooms at the Saturn School, where rule following was often privileged over youth innovation or creativity. Interestingly, school was often the topic youth brought up during the Voices workshop programming, which showed to me that teens do talk about school, but there is a spatial dimension regarding where this talk takes place. Tanya's response surfaced the restrictive properties of school that were present at the Saturn School but potentially in any school setting. I began to wonder, what specific

spatial properties of each program, made certain pedagogical and relational moves more or less possible or sustainable.

This material example of the physical places where youth appeared more likely to discuss school hints at the top-level external forces that drive how each program, Voices and Saturn School, were framed. This is part of why I included the historical description of each program (in Chapter IV and V), to show the institutional framing which lead to the creation of each respective program. Both the Voices program and Saturn School exist outside of the public education system. Yet, by its existence as a school, the Saturn School adheres to and follows many of the federal policies and practices set forth by the United States in regards to special education programs and service delivery.

The Voices program is imbricated with another set of institutional policies and practices, related to the field of juvenile justice. As discussed in Chapter V, it is a youth program associated with a larger organization, which actively seeks alternatives *to* incarceration. One reason why these spaces operated in different ways and supported adults (and youth) engaging with different sets of practices was due to the initial organizing of each respective program. Federal legislation, such as IDEIA (2004), mandates certain expectations for special education programs and service delivery. This guides how schooling institutions, which work with disabled youth are constructed and maintained. There is not a similar piece of legislation for court-involved youth, and while I do not argue for its creation it shows the possible institutional reasons why each restricted educational program supported different orientations towards youth.

Soja (2010) argues that the "ontological qualities of human existence, from which all knowledge follows" must include three qualities, "the social/societal, the

temporal/historical and the spatial/geographical" (p. 70). Looking across the Voices and Saturn School restricted educational programs the spatial properties of each illuminates engaging complications, which the social and temporal did not fully untether. Noting the spatial characteristics of restricted educational programs located within schools (during the school day) and outside of schools (after the school day) helped to show how the lived experiences of youth and adults within these spaces operate materially but also spatially.

Soja explains that one way of understanding the spatiality of human existence is through an attention to how spaces are produced in uneven ways. Harvey (2012) relates this to the economy and how goods are produced and distributed, and Soja makes a similar claim. When researchers, scholars and theorists, from the critical tradition orient themselves *towards* an awareness of uneven spatial productions, a theory of spatial (in) justice develops. Soja is quick to state, this does not eschew the social and temporal ways of producing knowledge about injustice, merely that the spatial properties of this uneven development are at times a more tangible and starker representation of large concepts such as justice.

I lay this out because an analysis of my collected data shows how attending to the spatial dimension highlights the limits and possibilities of spatial justice, through a discussion of the term restrictive and attention to the spatial dimension of restricted educational programs. It also further complicates researchers' social and temporal understandings of how restricted educational programs are created and maintained through practices and policies. Huddleston (2013) states, "To think spatially is not enough. Spatial thinking must always seek ways to ground itself in the material" (para.

12). The lived experiences from within spaces labeled restrictive shows that while spaces are inherently fluid it is the materiality of the spatial dimension which potentially limits the social processes from within a given space. Taking up a spatial analysis of the label restrictive includes an understanding that spaces, which are labeled restrictive, often (if not always) gain this label through the offering of more support. An implicit assumption about support as requiring restriction seems to persist within these spaces. Perhaps another approach is to de-couple the use of the term "restrictive" as a way to indicate a place, which offers more support (either academic or social emotional) for young people. I say this to assert that while spaces are dynamic, a label, such as the term "restrictive" while subjective, often results in lived material realities, which prohibit the freedoms of people within a given space.

In the following sections I highlight this tangible nature of space through the overarching themes of: conflicting ideologies of ability, spaces as limiting and limitless and embodiments of restriction. I offer these three themes further explore the label of restrictive through an analysis of the lived experiences of youth and adults occupying two separate restricted educational programs.

Conflicting Ideologies of Ability

An interrogation of the label restrictive requires deeper engagement with the ideologies of ability, which circulated within each space. Later in this chapter I discuss the potential limitless and limiting qualities of restrictive spaces, but in order to fully flesh out *how* spaces are interpreted as either limitless or limiting a discussion of the

ideology(ies) of ability circulating within and across these two restricted programs is helpful. Siebers (2008) writes,

> The ideology of ability is at its simplest the preference for able-bodiedness. At its most radical, it defines the baseline by which humanness is determined, setting the measure of body and mind that gives or denies human status to individual persons. (p. 8)

Kumari-Campbell (2015) states, "'Ability' employs a judgment that establishes standards of body and mind that are actionable in the present or projected futures" (p. 12). Drawing in Soja's discussion of spatial ontology offers another method of analysis to consider how circulating and at times divergent understandings of ability aid in the creation of social and physical spaces.

As Alexis, Kyle and Melissa described it the motivation at Voices was not to fix youth, though spatially the Voices program operated from within a system (Juvenile Justice) that aims to rehabilitate young people so that they are not arrested again. Within the Voices space ideologies of ability seemed to create less conflict and the result was the production of an ATDP afterschool program, which shifted commonly held assumptions about court involved youth. As noted, part of this is how each institution is framed by the larger organizations of which each is connected. This orientation or awareness of setting the conditions in order to develop a trusting relationship with youth was predicated on an understanding of ability as fluid. As described in Chapter IV, in the ways Alexis, Kyle and Melissa engaged in practices of deep listening and responding with care, youth were positioned as experts in their own lives. Rarely were interactions between youth and adults set up in a way that required an adult to lecture a young person or tell them what was required. Kyle explicitly stated she engaged in a wholly different practice, one that

asked the youth to identify what was going on. This orientation also relied on youth to identify what supports they might need in order to address a potential problem.

When youth at the Voices program attempted to orient themselves in a negative way (such as Nia referring to herself as a bad kid), the adults through engaging in practices of deep listening and responding with care engaged Nia in a conversation, which helped to shift and potentially re-frame her perspective. Similarly, when Joanna expressed interest in creative writing, in order to heighten her engagement and collaboration Melissa and I worked with Joanna to develop a workshop strand that address her interest in developing a novel. These practices of setting conditions to be with youth produced a space at the Voices program that was predicated on an assets orientation or capabilities approach. A deep tension of the Voices program space, which Alexis shared, was that youth were mandated to attend. Here the term restrictive is cast as a consequence, when in fact it is the supports offered within the Voices, which youth reported were beneficial. This suggests that differing ideologies do influence the space that is produced from within the label of restrictive. The Voices program seemed less likely to produce a space, which offered conflicting ideologies of ability, though adults at the Voices program may take up the practices in different ways. The underlying assumption was that youth attending the program were valuable contributors in society. The adults at the Saturn School took a different approach.

Figure 20: Digital collage based on Saturn School data.

I share this digital collage where I combined three bulletin boards from different hallways of the Saturn School. My purpose here was to visualize the messaging or "cover story" at the Saturn School. One which was often disrupted by the interactions of the youth and adults participants, Mr. Cross, Mr. Harpin and Ms. Rogers. When read together, the adult descriptive data suggested a common belief that placing a large group of disabled youth into a shared space either erased or greatly de-stigmatized their impairment. Since, the prevailing assumption in educational, health and rehabilitative sciences, as in everyday life, is to treat norms as static and subsequently to measure how others appear to depart from them (Titchkosky, 2015, p. 131). It was not surprising the ways adults at the Saturn school used the term normal as a sort of justification for the day-to-day interactions at the school.

This also demonstrated the conflicting ideologies of ability and ableism, which circulated within the schooling space. Titchkosky (2015) notes that it is this way of treating norms as static that socially produces a sense of normalcy as if it is an objective and universal phenomenon (p. 130). Again, another way of showing how the adults at Saturn grappled with conflicting ideologies of ability is how they often sought to "normalize" the Saturn school though it was rife with difference. Differences, which should be celebrated!

One bulletin board, which states "Everyone fits together at [Saturn]" may have meant to suggest at the Saturn School differences were celebrated, yet, an analysis of the youth data constructs another reading. While the youth participants at Saturn all identified as disabled, this was not a label each youth necessarily chose as the most important. Most youth participants shared that at Saturn they experienced less stigmatization related to their impairment, but this was not the case for all students. The adults at the school sometimes treated some students, especially those who used alternative forms of communication, differently, as Tanya reported. In addition, the two Black youth participants, Sapphire and Ron, questioned their limited participation in-school wide promotional events, such as the Saturn Outreach disability education program.

This data calls into questions statements such as, "Everyone fits together" and gives it a much darker reading. In order for everyone at the Saturn School to "fit together" certain youth, who occupied specific socio-spatial locations, such as race and/or ways of communication, must assume certain positions, while their White counterparts who use oral language assume a more privileged position within the school. Kumari-

Campbell (2015) writes, “Key to a system of ableism are two elements: the concept of the normative; and the enforcement of a divide between ‘perfected’ or developed humanity and the aberrant, unthinkable, underdeveloped and therefore not really human” (pp.13-14). This focus on normalcy was another symptom of the conflicting ideologies about ability present at the Saturn school.

In their definition of how Saturn was “normal” there was an underlying assumption from both Mr. Harpin and Ms. Rogers that the disabled experience is a negative one, associated with bullying, teasing, and stigmatization. From their standpoint, being disabled in a public high school was always stigmatizing and resulted in negative social interactions. While this may be the case for some, it is dangerous to accept this as the “rule” for lived experiences around disability for the youth at Saturn. Again, showing how while many of the adult participants in this study gestured towards some social understandings of impairment, often these were limited by adherence to medical models of impairment, which took up deficit understandings. I add this to suggest that while the Saturn School positioned itself as maintaining a “growth mindset” this was highly influenced by conflicting ideologies of ability, which took up ableism in daily practices, such as the practice of *curricular patching*, which I return in the next section.

As stated, all of the youth from the Saturn School chose to identify as disabled. Still, some youth, such as, Brian embraced this label more willingly than Paul who expressed he identified as disabled but wanted people to focus on his other attributes as well. Youth participants never used the term “normal” as a way describe themselves or the Saturn School across the entire study. Paul and Tanya shared that the adults at the Saturn school were more likely to approach a young person who uses a wheelchair and

engage them in conversation, but neither youth extended this to say that practice made them feel normal, though they suggested it was less stigmatizing. A few youth participants shared they wished people (outside of Saturn) would get to know them as more than their disability, or focusing on the other traits that the young person possessed beyond (or in addition to) their disability. Still, this wish or hope was not attached to a conception of normal.

This refusal on the part of the youth to describe the Saturn School as normal shows the potentiality of the Saturn School space to produce new models or ways of thinking about the social processes of dis/ability and related stigmatization. Yet, repeatedly the adult participants at the Saturn school re-inscribed this idea that the school was normal because the youth were different. Distilling a complex social process into: "we're all different, so we are all the same" or "everyone fits together" was a huge disservice to the ways youth participant's social processes produced a space that was inherently different, in how time operated and how independence (or interdependence) was established.

This turning away from the lived realities of youth was a stark contrast between the space produced through the interactions between youth and adults at the Voices program. Here was the beginning of a spatial way of thinking the appeared more easily employed in the Voices program setting, one that resisted the urge to normalize and instead positioned youth as expert. Put another way, it appeared the adults at Voices acknowledged the complicated systems within which youth were subsumed. This acknowledgement led to the creation of a space, both materially and socially which aimed to support youth as they navigated complex systems. As discussed, there was an openness

produced within the Voices program through the youth and adult interactions, which was never fully realized (or observed) during the adult and youth interactions at the Saturn school. This suggests something about each respective space and the social interactions occurring within each, which aided in the production of spaces that were either limitless or limiting.

Spaces as Limiting and Limitless

From within the Voices program the practices of *deep listening and responding with care, flexibility* and *collaboration/engagement* showed how the adults and youth at Voices interacted to co-construct a space, which offered youth a range of opportunities and possibilities. Here again, the spatial lens allowed for a deeper engagement with the complications of occupying a space that is "restrictive" but also offers possibilities. The space produced through the youth and adult interactions at the Voices program consistently demonstrated how a restricted space is also limitless. This is supported by Soja's (2010) claim about the "double-sidedness" of space, but it also demonstrates the dynamic quality of a label, such as "restrictive." This dynamic process is not meant to neutralize the term restrictive, but instead to suggest that labeling a space "restrictive," potentially limits educators and researchers capacities to imagine from within that space.

For the youth participants, the space produced at Voices was supportive, and heightened their engagement. It was through participating within a restricted program that Nia expressed "wanting to be engaged." Still, this is not a recommendation for more restrictive programs, but to show how spaces are inherently dynamic. This potential for change should be reflected in how spaces are labeled. This data shows how spaces are

fluid. It also suggests there is more engagement in practices which acknowledge the dynamic nature of space from within a program labeled restrictive that exists outside of the educational system. There is an inherent fixed orientation towards spaces, which appears to occur more often in places labeled school or connected to the educational system. Continued educational research, which moves beyond identifying systemic inequality, is needed. Here the term "restrictive" and spaces/programs to which this label is affixed potentially offer new pathways for considering how places of learning are built, represented and maintained.

This is partially shown in how the space was limited at the Saturn School through the adults underlying assumptions, particularly in regards to the lived experience of disability. In discussing the history of how the population of youth attending the school had shifted Mr. Harpin and Mr. Cross often used language such as, "alternative assessment kids" or "higher functioning kids." This language use was indicative of tacit assumptions made by all adult participants in this study that a youth labeled "alternative assessment" would likely not to share the label of "high functioning." This deficit oriented thinking shows how ideas related to service delivery, amount of support required and "functioning" often led to the creation of a space at the Saturn School that limited the practices adults enacted within the space. The practice of *curricular patching* was one example of this. Across this data refrains, Mr. Cross, Mr. Harpin and Ms. Rogers, limited their own thinking based on several factors, many bound up within the persistent deficit orientations towards disabled people and those who work with or in support of disabled communities (Kittay, 2005). This created barriers to the transgressive potentialities of the Saturn School space. As an example, the practice of time, and how time was bent through

the embodied interaction of youth within the Saturn School space, indicated, there was potential to produce a space that was attuned *to* youths' lived experiences.

In a recent study Waitoller & Artiles (2016) refer to the practice of curricular curating as a way educators design and deliver curriculum in inclusive classrooms to (and with) young people. The authors suggest the practice of curating relies on teacher knowledge and expertise to locate and blend together a variety of instructional strategies and modes to produce accessible curriculum for all students. The collected data at the Saturn School suggested there was the potential for this type of practice (curating), but instead of taking time to engage in thoughtful and meaningful curricular curating, the teachers at Saturn used more of a grab-and-go practice of curricular patching. Sometimes this practice, of locating disparate curricula and drawing them together, was based on the perceived learning need of the young person. It happened more often without meaningful self-reflexive practice, on behalf of the educator, that could potentially deepen this type of curriculum planning. I suggest the practice of patching as opposed to curating was in part due to the socio-spatial location of the adults within the Saturn School space.

This demonstrates an ongoing and perhaps forever limiting complication of what the Saturn School is representative of for many spaces of schooling. The adult and youth interactions, which produced social spaces at Saturn left little room for beginning something new without controlling the consequences. Often, the adult participants expressed frustration in the ways youth at the Saturn School attempted to resist or express this type of freedom, such as when Ullrich crafted a graduation program which was outside the assignment parameters or when Ron wondered why his wheelchair was edited out of his photo shopped image. Tying this up with the previous theme, it was the

conflicting ideologies of ability, which aided in the spatial production where a practice of *curricular patching* was good enough.

This relates back to how the adult participants described the youth within the space, sometimes from a deficit or limiting view, which in turn hampered their ability to move the practice of curricular patching towards a more thoughtful practice of curricular curating. It was the space of the Saturn School itself, which played a role in how these limitations were falsely set up by the adult participants in the space. This leads to the final theme for analysis, one that engages directly with the ways adults (and youth) in both spaces described and thought about their respective restricted educational program.

When Rose, Meyer and Hitchcock (2005) discuss the need to plan for youth in the margins it is suggested that this curricular thinking, planning for those in the margins, results in robust instructional planning incorporating a variety of learners. While the Saturn School stands out as a place of marginality, there were aspects of the school, which were almost liberatory. Yet, the constant use of public school as the referent also inevitably limited the adults working at Saturn. The emphasis on normal, primarily by the adults, showed a lack of awareness about the potentiality of the space. There are other models the school could take up in order to de-stigmatize deficit orientations about impairment, yet these were rarely, if ever explored. Ultimately the spatial productions at Saturn were limited by how the adults took up and engaged with youth from within the school.

Embodiments of Restriction

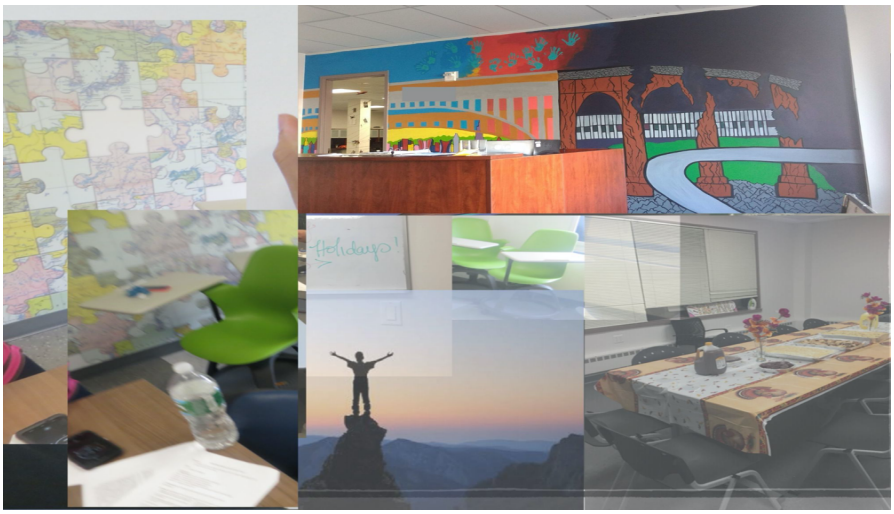

Figure 21: Digital collage based on the Voices data.

I begin with this collage which I developed as I analyzed across the data from the Voices program. Combining still images of the Voices program space, including a mural, painted about 6 months before my data collection began. When I asked the youth participants to describe the mural they explained the left hand side represented the pathway to Voices and the left hand side, with bright colors and hand prints represented their lived experiences after participating in the program. I added the image of the silhouette person a top a rock peak with their arms flung open to symbolize the way youth and adults characterized a type of freedom. I refer to freedom here in an Arendtian sense, as Simplican (2015) citing Arendt states, "a willingness to 'begin something new and of not being able to able to control or even foretell its consequences'" (p. 129). Across both sites the data showed that there were ways, in which a space was defined by interactions occurring within it, oriented towards or away from a willingness to begin

without knowing the consequences. Again, this is inevitably a much more difficult orientation to take up from within schools based solely on their current (and historical) (Kliebard, 2004) organization here in the United States.

Part of Soja's (1989) project with thirdspace, was to show how interactions and social processes produce a social space which works in concert with the built and representational space. Part of this has to do with how spaces are embodied. Imrie (2015) states, "The human body is always emplaced, and its placement is conditioned, in part, by the social content and context of a place" (p.171). This allows researchers to consider spaces as agentive, both acting and acted upon by the people inhabiting them. Soja (2010) describes the ontological claims space opens up theoretically, which is why an educational researcher looking at the history or social processes of a perceived problem limits their own possibilities of inquiry by not paying concerted effort to the space and its context (Massey, 2005) within which an inquiry is subsumed.

There is an opening when considering how the term "restrictive" is used and applied to spaces (programs) both in and outside of schools. The data shows that within the Voices program space there was a different orientation towards understanding and supporting youth. One oriented towards actively questioning with youth, about their lived experiences. Related to the collage above there existed in the practices the adults engaged with a willingness to form trusting relationships with youth without "being able to able to control or even foretell its consequences" (Simplican citing Arendt, 2015, p. 129). This was a unique spatial component to how the Voices program was established and maintained which elucidates the dynamic and fluid nature of spaces.

It also served as an example of Soja's (2010) "double-sidedness" of space. From with the label of "restrictive" a program existed which worked to provide meaningful capacity-oriented support for court-involved youth. This was demonstrated through the practices of *deep listening and responding with care, flexibility* and *engagement and collaboration.* These practices allowed the adults and youth develop more opportunities to foster trusting relationships, thereby aiding in the creation of a space which inherently valued the knowledge and wisdom from youth. This included an awareness on behalf of the adults, as to how the space itself and the label of "restrictive" acted upon the youth occupying the space.

Saturn School, which occupied an alternative schooling space, gestured towards this fluid nature of spaces but remained more structured in the interactions between youth and adults which aided in the production of a social space. Relationships between youth and adults existed but were more finite, connected to labels such as, "alternative assessment" and "high functioning" and the trajectory those labels suggested. There was less embracing, on behalf of the adults, an Arendtian sense of freedom (Simplican, 2015). At Saturn School the label "restrictive" appeared more fitting, specifically demonstrated through the practice of *curricular patching* which produced a space where some youth reported not feeling academically challenged.

To add a layer of complication and further analyze the label of "restrictive," youth did share that Saturn was less stigmatizing. There were moments across the Saturn School day where youth (and adult) resisted deficit tinged thinking. Spaces were produced which involved meaningful participation, such as during independent work time, where the ways adults and youth co-produced materials, for example when Ms.

Rogers worked with Sapphire to create her portfolio collage. Still, the ways that the adult staff at Voices oriented themselves towards the youth and sought out to intentionally produce a space, valued youth as producers and meaningful contributors never crystallized at the Saturn School. This suggests about the spaces themselves, though both labeled "restrictive," and their placement as in school and out-of-school.

Was the orientation and practices the adults at Voices engaged with only possible from a space labeled "restrictive" in an out-of-school context? Perhaps yes. Did it matter that Voices was not affiliated or connected spatially with an in-school space? Again, yes. In considering the ways the adults at the Voices program and Saturn School engaged with their restricted educational program spaces, it appeared at the Saturn School there were less opportunities or concerted efforts for the adults to inquire into the specific spaces they occupied. The adults at Voices were more likely to engage in practices which allowed them to open themselves up to the "limitless" possibilities for youth through actively naming and interrogating the restricted space they shared with the young people enrolled in the program. I refer to this as "spatial speculation" which elucidates the ways the adults at the Voices program imagined possible spatialized futures for youth attending the program.

Spatial speculation involves the ways adults (and some youth), embodied practices, which allowed for the imagining of futures for a young people regardless of their socio-spatial location, including their label of disability and/or court involvement. I draw here from recent work from Schalk (2018) and Pickens (2019) whose respective literary analyses explores the possibilities of black speculative fiction as another opening point for understanding the ways race and ability are both intertwined but also separate

ways of forming identity. Schalk (2018) focuses on the body and argues that the body/mind binary is wholly false, while Pickens' (2019) discusses how madness and Blackness mutually construct one another.[1] Both scholars suggest that black speculative fiction offers a helpful frame to consider the fluidity of lived experience. While neither set of adult participants fully described a practice of spatial speculation. There were gestures towards speculation through ways the adult and youth interactions within the Voices program allowed youth's lived experiences to breathe.

This speculation regarding spaces was seen at Voices in the adults' interactions with youth and the adults' willingness to imagine with youth about multiple futures. Soja (2010) in his theorizing critical spatial (in) justice theory calls for a type of spatial consciousness, which he describes as a reflexive awareness of the spaces people occupy across their lifetimes, along with a reflexive historical social awareness of the injustices enacted and replicated through the production and maintenance of spaces. The adults at Voices embodied a spatial consciousness as a way to attend to the spaces youth occupied and imagine them otherwise. This spatial speculation was done with youth in service of developing new trajectories and way of being from within the label of court-involvement.

At Saturn School the adult participants rarely speculated about their student's lives outside of the Saturn School space, except to explain its deficits. Again this draws out a spatial complication that may always exists for schools but which an interrogation of the label restrictive further illuminates. The ways schools are organized, especially in the post-No Child Left Behind era which ushered in heightened mandates for standards, accountability and evidence based achievement, makes it difficult to take up an Arendtian

[1] This is an extremely reductive description of both scholars work for more, but a more detailed description is outside the scope of this current research project. (cf. Schalk, 2018) and Pickens (2019).

openness (as cited in Simplican, 2015). Schools, especially public schools or state funded schools, claim there are specific goal posts, which young people must meet. Schools are built and designed as fixed contained for youth bodies. Put another way, all schools are sites of restrictive practices, which often erases or obscures the material consequences of deficit-tinged thinking. A spatialized curriculum, then, is one, which attends to the violent histories of a space and maintains a critical awareness of the material consequences of deficit thinking, such as creating and maintaining specific spaces labeled restrictive.

Figure 22: Digital collage based on the Saturn School data.

This collage draws from Mr. Harpin's comment in Chapter V comparing the Saturn School to Hogwarts. Creating the digital collage I reflected on the term "spatial speculation" to further articulate what I meant by that term and why I chose to use it as I analyzed this dissertation data. I consider the term "spatial speculation" to refer to how a person within a given space images or thinks about that space. In his description Mr. Harpin imagines the school as magical, a place where youth are magicians and that is not weird. As I placed images from a Google image search for the Harry Potter films along with still images of spaces from the Saturn School I thought about how Mr. Harpin's example was open but also re-ified an assumption that disabled youth do not belong in the general community. In the center of this collage I placed another digital collage, made by Sapphire, one of the youth participants at Saturn School. It reminded me of her comment, about leaving the building any chance she got. Spatial speculation at the Saturn School appeared limited to the school itself and how it was imagined. Adults who occupied the Saturn School space with young people rarely enacted practices, which imagined new material realities for themselves or the youth.

This potential, to radically engage with how an alternative schooling space was produced and producing those who inhabit it remained unfulfilled. The adults at Saturn often relied on the common structures of schooling (standards and assessment) to label, sort and classify the youth attending the school. Due to the practices of the adults within the space there were limited ways adults harnessed the potentiality of the space itself. This extended to how the adult participants occupying the space at Saturn School allowed themselves to imagine the space.

Spatial speculation was produced in the Voices space and often turned away from, in the Saturn space. This ability to imagine from within a space labeled "restricted" further complicates the label and opens up lines of inquiry which regard all spaces as productions, physically entities which are dynamic and always shifting. From that standpoint, the label of "restrictive" becomes more porous when the people occupying the space use the label of restriction to disrupt dominant narratives, as was the case at the Voices program through the lived experiences of Nia and Joanna. The question remains, is this way of orienting towards openness possible from within a schooling space?

This takes seriously the socio-spatial dialectic occurring within spaces labeled "restrictive" and maintains an orientation towards the opening places of possibility even from within a space labeled restricted. As I have shown, this appeared more likely to occur with the restricted program at Voices. It was often limited in the restricted program at the Saturn school. This is part of the rationale for why I chose to engage with two restricted educational programs in an in-school and afterschool context. Placing them alongside, around and on top of one another (in a theoretical sense) helps construct an analysis which considers how the falsely conceived barriers between spaces labeled "in or outside" of school must be further interrogated in order to inquire more fruitfully (and spatially) about the possible futures for the youth inhabiting restrictive educational programs.

One-way is to further study how perceived learning supports and place remain conflated, primarily within schools. The out of school space offers rich opportunities to further understand youth learning across various spaces. It also suggests new ways to consider service delivery and place. Services (either related to disability label or court

involvement) happen in spaces, yet, the interaction of receiving support need not require the label of restrictive. Inclusive education runs the risk of working against, or in tension with its theoretical underpinnings if the term “restrictive” continues to be used in regards to placement. The continuum of special education services by offering an array of service options between more or less restrictive perpetuates fixed place and service thinking. It also suggests an assumption that those who require more support (either academically or social emotionally) receive this support in spaces labeled restrictive. As the data from this study suggests, young people want both a close-knit community and the possibilities to access same-age peers. Why do (specifically schools) continue to perpetuate material spaces, which resist this fluidity of movement? More research in regards to this spatialized component of the special education and juvenile justice continua is needed.

Figure 23: Digital collage made by Sapphire in Media arts class.

I offer a large version of the collage created by Sapphire, intentionally without analysis or interpretation for you, the reader, to speculate on your own.

Implications

The implications of this research develop into several sustainable lines of inquiry, which are quite important for the larger project of inclusive education. If, inclusive education is a way of thinking about curriculum design and schooling in general, which aims to presume competence and support young people through the identification of strengths in service of developing perceived weaknesses. Then, the continued reliance on spaces labeled "restrictive" by school professionals (and family court judges) is a fallacy, which must be untethered from how services such as special education or alternatives to detention are conceptualized.

Implications for Teaching and Curriculum

The implications for teaching and learning relate to of *how* an educator engages with his or her curriculum with an attention to the spatial dimension. These implications are a strong departure from evidence based practices and measurable outcomes often present in teacher education. An implication of this project is to create spaces *with* educators to foster their creative and innovative leanings. I refer to this as a spatialized curriculum: a way of designing instruction, which acknowledges the ongoing social interactions, which draw from or potentially disrupt the original design. Similar to how Soja (1989) conceptualizes thirdspace. Curriculum is material (built), represented and

then produced through the interactions within a classroom space. From this an understanding of curriculum design as an active site of knowledge creation is paramount, even more so, is the *spatialized* nature of how curriculum is designed and disseminated. This puts a challenge to the text-based curricula that many public school teacher employ as their instructional delivery. I do not suggest that teachers should remove those curricula but instead emplot them with intention into a historical and spatial discourse regarding the context of the classroom. Through a concerted attention on the spaces that educators share with youth (whatever their label may be) this research shows that it is necessary to consider more fully what spatialized curricula might look, sound and feel like. Part of this would involve spatial speculation and educators honing their ability to imagine along with the necessary requirements of teaching a (potentially) standardized curriculum. A spatialized curriculum requires an educator maintain a posture of openness to the world, themselves and the youth with whom the educator shares space.

This also points towards a more authentic engagement with *how* inclusive spaces are produced which moves away from fixed labels to more fluid understandings. Part of what a deep interrogation of the label of "restrictive" shows is that any space is potentially liberating or restrictive. The danger is in how a space is labeled restrictive and what practices may occur within the space as a result of receiving this label. While labeling a specific program or space may affect the social interactions within the space, inclusive educators need to spend more time attuning to the spaces themselves. Part of this involves engagement with the spaces outside of schools, such as afterschool programs, community based organizations and other out-of-school spaces.

A curricular engagement with space requires educators to engage with difficult questions about the places they occupy, such as an educators role within systems of oppression (especially in the schooling space). I see land acknowledgements as an extension of this work, which names the layered histories, which have occurred on land which we (the people here today) may claim to own. A similar acknowledgement must happen with the systems of special education and juvenile justice. An inclusive educator may occupy any space, but must always strive to understand her own socio-spatial-political location as well as the socio-spatial-political location of her students. This also calls into question the continued use of the label "restrictive" and what it *does* to the project of inclusive education. This research demonstrates the simultaneous need for attention to the practices occurring within a space as well as how the space is built and represented.

Implications for Theory

This dissertation study involved developing a theoretical framing, which used a DSE framework with a lens of critical spatial theory. After collecting and analyzing the data the two theories work well together to develop more lines of inquiry related to theories about how inclusive education is both enacted but also understood. As critical spatial theory is a *relatively* recent addition in conversation with DS/DSE there is potential for using these fields in complementary ways. There is an openness in using the DSE framework with a lens of critical spatial theory, which further destabilizes long held ties between place and label. Continued theoretical work is needed which engages with

how labels are spatialized, not only with how a label is affixed to a person, but how a label is affixed to a space.

The DSE framework is helpful here because it pushes how the concept of access beyond the physical is not fully theorized by critical spatial theorists. In fact, as with much of philosophy, in the writings of critical spatial theory disability is either the example or the afterthought. For example, it is unclear if when Lefebvre (1991) discusses the rights of citizens that he includes the disabled and incarcerated in his description. This is made even more powerful with the application of the DSE framework, which offers a broader understanding of what is meant by citizen. More of this type of theorizing that encompasses the lived experiences of people with disabilities and people who are court involved is needed.

An affordance of putting the DSE framework in conversation with critical spatial theory is the multitude of methodologies and methods available. While new materialism was not used in this research study, this project makes a strong argument for why theoretically people and materials must be considered together as part of the space someone occupies. It also shows why multimodal approaches to data collection and analysis offer more than a scientific "truth." This continues to push the field of qualitative research to consider, what constitutes knowledge and who's knowledge is it? More theorization is needed which engages with multimodality as a stance used in the design and implementation of research projects.

Implications for Policy

Recent research on inclusive practices and developing inclusive schools considers the learning environment but still presumes the general education classroom as the least restrictive, most likely because it is regarded as the more normalized setting. This continued emphasis on spaces, without spending time considering the spatial qualities of specific spaces fails to disrupt deeply entrenched ways of understanding difference within and outside of schools, which requires further investigation. This might occur at the policy level in terms of how Rights, such as those codified in the IDEIA (2004), are written and which perspectives or models of disability are considered in the drafting of laws, especially those related to education.

In practice, when individualized education programs are developed or re-visited, the continuum of special education programs and services must be further evaluated to determine how and when specific spaces are selected and for which students. A similar conversation should occur for how judges determine placement for court-involved youth. Part of this is related to how educational researchers and teacher educators allow ourselves, and our research participants and teacher candidates to imagine spaces.

Future Research

Conducting Research with Youth

More collaborative research with youth is needed. While research traditions such as Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) are integral to developing research which is often led and designed by youth, it is far less often that disabled or court involved youth have access to these research projects. Furthermore, there appears to be a tendency in the YPAR discourse about identifying problems or challenges and conducting research in those areas. This way of identifying "problems" is deficit-tinged. While this critical lens is important and necessary one of the major implications from this project is that more research is needed in which adults and youth collaboratively co-produce topics which may not be identified as problems, but are instead tied to youth interests.

One of the ongoing difficulties in shifting orientations *towards* (in this case) youth with disabilities and youth who are court involved is the way spaces are used (or positioned) as sites of rehabilitation, which aim to "fix" young people. The underlying assumption being that a specific place (often one that is more restricted) has specific spatial properties. This remains attached to deficit or medical models of thinking about difference. Finally, researching with youth takes time and attention on behalf of the researcher. It also requires drawing on theories of multimodality, which allow for the researcher to set the conditions to enter the research space. This allows for a type of "epistemic witnessing" (Pillow, 2019), which attends more carefully to the lived

experiences of youth and how youth make meaning from those experiences. All youth should be included in these projects but a strong starting point is with labeled youth and their lived experiences.

Affordances of Multimodal Approaches

As I touched upon in the implications for theory section, multimodality as a stance and the multimodal approaches I employed across this study, such as audio recording, taking still photography, and engaging with youth digital artifacts allowed me, as the researcher, to attune to the various modes through which the research participants communicated across the various spaces. This attunement was extremely important in how I developed relationships at each research site and conducted the data collection. My awareness that I could not capture it all but that I could attempt to make gestures to the full spatial production across this project was greatly added by theories of multimodality. More research is needed which takes seriously theories of semiotics and multimodality as a stance or way of being as a researcher. I intentionally play with visual data across this work to address how we communicate in ways that are much richer and more evocative than solely text based. This is an important implication from this research, which is continuing to establish itself and grow.

Co-Production and Collaborative Research

As discussed in the section on research with youth, collaboration and co-production is key. I intentionally move away from Action Research because I think the

terms co-production and collaboration suggest a more horizontal way of conducting research together. While I do think research which provides youth with spaces to lead and take ownership is important. I also see the value in conducting research *with* that is not driven by asking young people to identify issues but instead based on collaborative work amongst young people and adults. It may be that collaborative research addresses similar dilemmas, but in this sense the research project emerges more holistically.

As I collected the data for this project, I found myself wondering what it might be like to ask the Saturn School 12th graders or youth at Voices to comment on my proposed inquiry. To bring back Tanya' comment about teens and school, this forever remains a huge moment of pause for me during this project. A moment in which, I reflexively engaged with my own socio-spatial-location. I had to acknowledge the ways I potentially oppressed my research participants by creating a dissertation research project and asking them to participate fully knowing they had no part in the project design. As stated, more research is needed which builds in time for the development of collaborative partnerships with youth (and adults) that includes not only participation but also research design.

Directions for Future Research

Directions for future research as a result of this study must include three main elements: participation from youth at the beginning of a research project, framing of the study to/with research partners, and developing realistic and sustainable timelines for research. Part of what I learned with this research was my choice (and in part requirement) to design most of this study before site recruitment meant that I completed most of the research design on my own. Future research with youth must begin with

youth participation and involvement this could include how the research questions and methods are developed, and which theoretical frameworks are used.

When I introduced this project to program coordinators and school leaders the inherent fluidity required when collaborating with youth was not always present. This was due to how I initially framed the project to research partners during the recruitment phase. In the out of school research site, there were more opportunities to design moments for interaction with youth. As an example, I created a digital storytelling workshop cycle at Joanna's request. I developed this with the Voices adult staff members and this workshop became a site of data collection with Joanna, as a result. It was much more difficult to develop this reciprocity and responsiveness to youth within the schooling space. Future research requires that the research consider how the project is framed and presented to research partners, beginning with the school leaders and program developers.

Finally, while YPAR has sound models for engaging research practice with youth, it is important to understand the ethical partnership of collaboration. This requires that a research build time into their research design and data collection plan to focus on relationship and rapport building at the start of a collaborative study with youth. Another learning from this dissertation study is the length of time it took to develop positive rapport and relationships with both youth and adults. It is suggested that this type of collaborative research investigate the affordances of longitudinal research, and sustained research partnerships.

Similarly a recommendation for research that employs multimodal methods of collection and analysis is to continue to consider *who* is creating and recording the

various modes of communication. For this study, I was the primary recorder and analyzer of the collected data. There is a need to employ more visual research methods, which involve participants, such as taking photographs, creating maps, and collaging. This connects back to the previous recommendation about researching *with* youth. The framing of the project must remain flexible enough to take up methods such as asking research participants to engage in their own digital collage making. Similarly, a researcher must build time in to the research design for the development of a rapport with research participants where there are moments for engaging in visual methods together.

Closing (and Possible Openings)

There are stories about youth, which circulate in spaces. This is one way dominant deficit discourses easily attach themselves to specific spaces. In few spaces where "difference is the norm," where the margins are the center – what do we learn? An attention to the spatial dimension of inquiry shows nuance, the careful ways humans negotiate dominant discourses about ability and at times divert from them. These social processes of resisting and enacting dominant discourses, such as a deficit orientation towards youth, often produce spaces and are simultaneously being produced by the people who occupy them. In this way programs like Voices and the Saturn school are always "in the margins" because of how society is structured, but that is an organizing feature, which a spatial inquiry begins to untangle. This leads to the possible eradication of the label "restrictive", not to engage in politically correct semantics, but to suggest that all places of education must inherently be oriented towards freedom, capacity and

limitless possibilities while still including the myriad of supports required for all to access these spaces. By positioning oneself to locate the limiting and limitless possibilities of any space (in or out of school) there is possibility in developing new lines of inquiry, which learn from and with youth who occupy any type of classroom setting.

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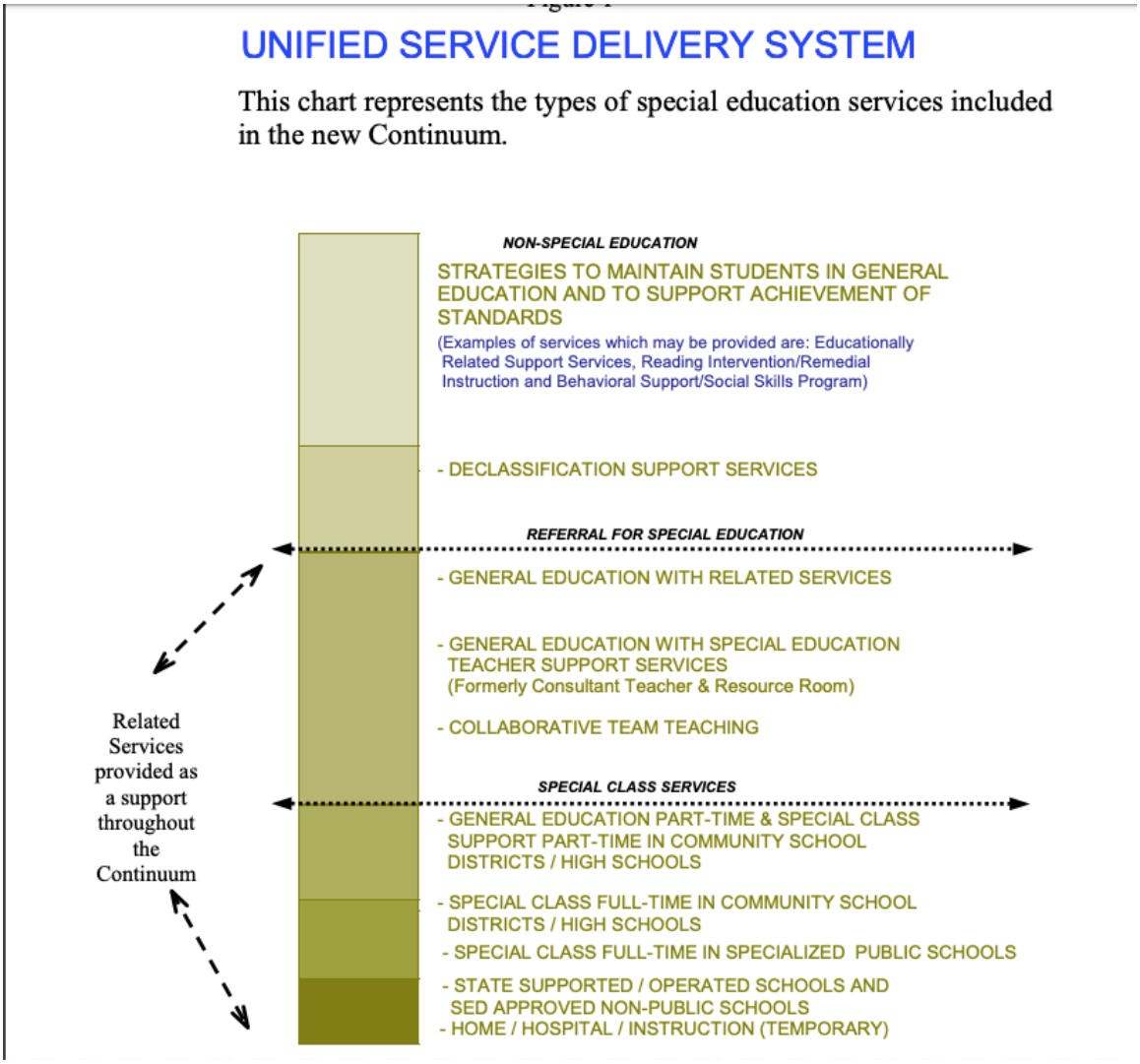
Appendix A

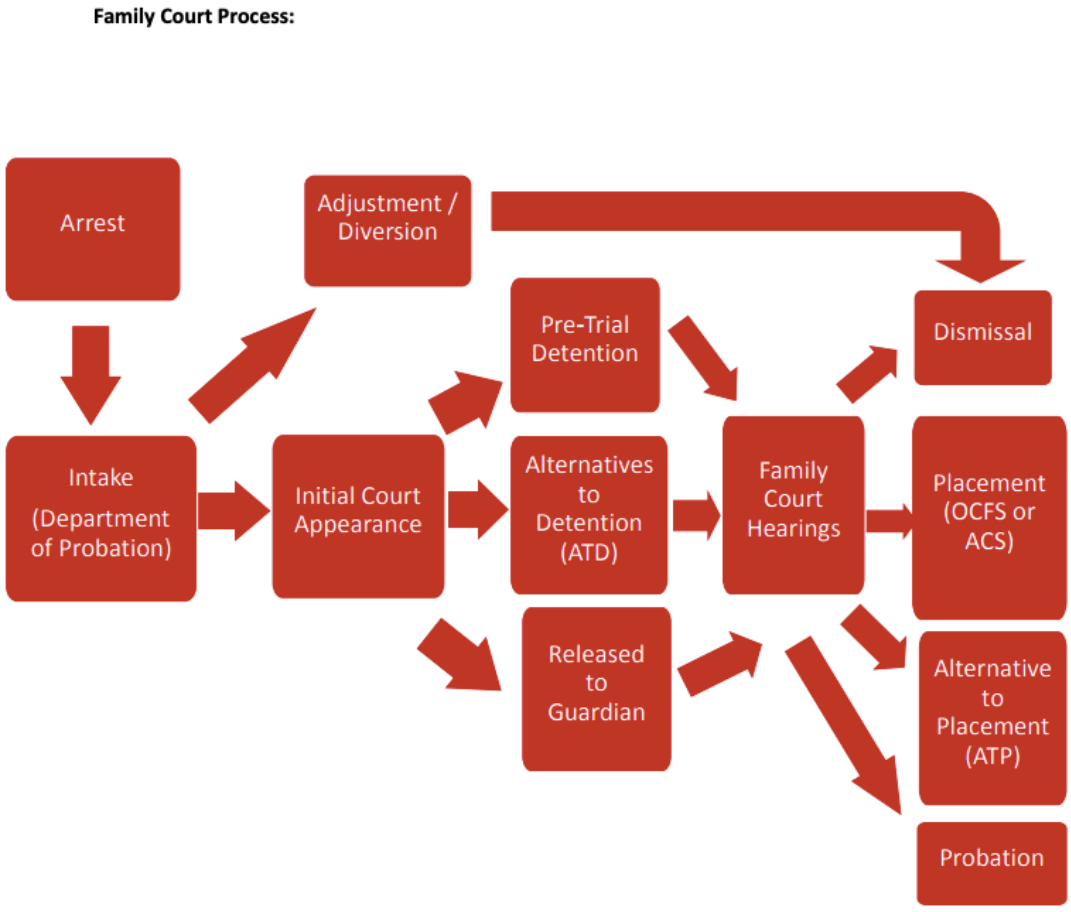
Special Education Continuum of Services



(http://www.uft.org/files/attachments/doe-continuum-of-services.pdf)

Appendix B

Family Court Process



(http://networkforyouthsuccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Youth-Justice-Overview-Final.pdf)

Appendix C

Interview Protocols

Open-ended interview protocol (adults)

At start of interview: Review consent and explain. Turn on audio recording, check sound level. State: My name is Katherine Newhouse (researcher) on ___date____ at ____time____ in ____state specific location____. I am here speaking with ___research participant____. Please introduce yourself.

Researcher: Tell me a bit about how you came to work at [insert program name].

Narrator responds.

Begin asking open-ended questions.

Then move to follow up questions and clarifying questions.

"Tell me more about that?"

"Tell me how you feel about that?"

"Help me understand what you mean when you said _____ ?"

Semi-Structured interview protocol (Youth)

Beginning of interview: Review assent and explain. Turn on audio, check sound levels.

Start: My name is Katherine Newhouse and I am with _____. Today is

(date/time/location). _____ please introduce yourself.

Describe your school (afterschool) to me. How would you describe your school (afterschool) to someone you don't know?

Tell me about your classroom (workshop).

How would you describe your classroom (workshop) to a friend? How would you describe it to someone you don't know?

What happens in your classroom (workshop)? Tell me about something you remember happening there.

Further specific questions will be developed based on initial phases of participant observations drawn from analysis of field notes.

Appendix D

Ways Data Collection and the Data Analysis

Were Used to Address the Research Questions

Research Questions	Data source	Analysis	Notes
What kinds of educational experiences occur within spaces that are labeled as restrictive?	Participant observation Descriptive and reflective field notes	Analytic bracketing and coding of descriptive and reflective field notes. Member checking as vignettes are developed.	
How do people within these spaces take up conceptions of ability and disability?	Open-ended interview Semi-structured interview	In order to determine how adult participants in the three-dimensional research space take up conceptions of ability and disability. To understand how youth self-identify and are experiencing the space either through identify as disabled or court involved.	
What kinds of social interactions take place within these restrictive spaces?	Participant observation Descriptive field notes	Participant observations allowed me to spend time in the three-dimensional research space and observe the social interactions in both spaces, while also building	

		relationships with my research participants.	
What types of interactions characterize the relationship between teachers and students?	Participant observation Descriptive and reflective field notes	Building on my previous category, participant observation and coding of descriptive and reflective field notes helped me to provide this characterization.	This data set was compared with interview data to determine how my interpretation of interactions relates to how adults and youth interpret their interactions. (Constant-comparative method)
How are restrictive educational spaces experienced by the people (educators, students, staff and families) who inhabit them?	Semi structured interviewing Open-ended interviewing	Open-ended interviews helped to gain better understanding of how people's conceptions of ability and disability develop.	
How do they (educators, students, staff and families) describe their understanding of the activities of teaching and learning within these spaces?	Semi structured interviewing Open-ended interviewing	The interviews I conduct provided me with opportunities for my adult participants to describe, in their own words, how they understand the activities of teaching and learning, which they develop for their respective restricted educational space.	

How do they (educators, students, staff and families) describe themselves in relation to these spaces?	Semi structured interviewing Open-ended interviewing	Again, interviews provide me with information to then analyze in relation to my descriptive field notes to show how participants come to understand and talk about the three dimensional research space.	